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A MUSLIM'S CHARACTER

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Istanbul
2020 / 1441 H

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**A MUSLIM'S
CHARACTER
-2-**

Original Title: Müslüman'ın Güzel Ahlakı - 2
Editor for Turkish edition: Faruk Kanger, PhD.
Author: Faruk Kanger, PhD.
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Redaction for Turkish Edition: Lokman Helvacı
English Translation: İsmail Eriş
Editor for English Translation: Amjad M. Hussain, PhD.
Graphics: İlhan Baştaş
Publishing: Erkam Printhouse
ISBN: 978-605-302-759-1
Adres: İkitelli Organize Sanayi Bölgesi Mah.
Atatürk Bulvarı, Haseyad 1. Kısım
No: 60/3-C Başakşehir, İstanbul,
Türkiye
Phone: (90-212) 671-0700 pbx
Fax: (90-212) 671-0748
E-mail: info@islamicpublishing.org
Web: www.islamicpublishing.org
Language: English



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CONTENTS

PREFACE	11
INTRODUCTION.....	13

CHAPTER 11: BEING FAIR (TO ALL CREATION) / 29

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	30
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH)	31
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION:	32
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE JUST IF IT IS NOT ABOUT EQUAL TREATMENT?	32
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	33
THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH (PBUH) DID NOT TREAT EQUALLY!	33
EVEN IF MY DAUGHTER DOES!	34
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	35
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	36
WE DO NOT PAY BRIBE!	36
THE RIGHT OF THE BABY.....	37
THE SWORD OF JUSTICE.....	38
A SOLDIER WITH IMPECCABLE MORALS	39
TEST YOURSELF	40
HOW JUST ARE YOU?.....	40
IF I WERE HIM	41
CHEATING AT THE TEST	41
INSIDE LIFE	42
INTERPRETING PICTURES	42
EXAMPLES FROM REAL LIFE.....	43
THREE SACKS OF SOLDIER UNIFORMS	43
CHILDREN OF THE GHETTO	44
CLASS ACTIVITY	45
HOW CAN JUSTICE BE ACHIEVED?.....	45
YOU CAN BE THE BEST.....	46

CHAPTER 12: SEEKING ONE'S RIGHT AND STANDING UP AGAINST INJUSTICE / 47

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	48
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET.....	49
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	50
STANDING UP AGAINST INJUSTICE MEANS PROTECTING HUMAN HONOR.....	50
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	51
SAVE A DAY FOR US.....	51
THEY RESERVED THE BLESSINGS OF PARADISE!	52
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	53
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	54
THE WOMAN WHO DEFENDS HER RIGHT	54

THE LIVES OF FORTY PEOPLE.....	55
TEST YOURSELF.....	56
HOW MUCH ATTENTION DO YOU PAY TO PROTECTING YOUR RIGHTS AND STANDING UP AGAINST INJUSTICE?	56
IF I WERE HIM	57
YOU HAVE FALLEN INTO THE HANDS OF LANDLORD	57
INSIDE LIFE	58
INTERPRETING PICTURES	58
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	59
THE STICK OF ALLAH	59
CLASS ACTIVITY	60
ROLE PLAYING.....	60
THE AGELESS SUITCASE.....	60
YOU DO THE BEST	61

CHAPTER 13: BEING TOLERANT, KIND AND POLITE / 63

THE MUSLIM LOVED BY ALLAH	64
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	65
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	66
BEING TOLERANT AND POLITE GIVES A PERSON PEACE AND TRANQUILITY	66
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	67
DO NOT SMELL OF SWEAT!.....	67
THE CHOICE OF ZAYD	67
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	69
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	70
THE INFLUENCE THAT THE LENIENT AND THE POLITE COMPANION LEFT	70
TEST YOURSELF.....	72
HOW TOLERANT AND POLITE ARE YOU?.....	72
EMPATHY	73
THE ANGRY VOICE.....	73
INSIDE LIFE	74
INTERPRETING PICTURES	74
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	75
COOKIE THIEF.....	75
CLASS ACTIVITY	76
TAKE ONESELF INTO ACCOUNT	76
YOU CAN BE THE BEST.....	77

CHAPTER 14: SHOWING RESPECT AND ATTENDING TO PARENTS / 79

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	80
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET	81
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	82
HOW CAN WE SHOW RESPECT TO OUR PARENTS?	82
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	83

MY BELOVED PROPHET (PBUH) IS MY BEST EXAMPLE IN SHOWING RESPECT TO AND SERVING PARENTS / THE SECOND GREATEST SIN AFTER ASCORBING PARTNERS TO ALLAH	83
ONE WHO DESERVES TO BE TREATED BEST IN THIS LIFE	83
THE PROPHET WHO LAYS HIS GARMENT ON THE GROUND	84
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	85
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	86
MY MOM'S MOMENT OF DEATH	86
A MOTHER'S SUPPLICATION	86
THE MAN WHO GIVES THE BEDOUIN HIS DONKEY	87
TEST YOURSELF.....	88
HOW RESPECTFUL ARE YOU TO YOUR PARENTS?.....	88
EMPATHY	89
IF YOU GET TOO ANGRY... ..	89
INSIDE LIFE.....	90
INTERPRETING PICTURES	90
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	91
OBEDIENCE TO MOTHER.....	91
MOTHER'S LOVE.....	92
CLASS ACTIVITY	93
CONFESSION	93
YOU CAN BE THE BEST.....	94

CHAPTER 15: BEING CONTENT AND GRATEFUL / 95

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	96
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET.....	97
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	98
BEING CONTENT IS THE KEY FOR PEACE AND TRANQUILITY	98
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	100
MY BELOVED PROPHET, MY BEST EXEMPLAR IN BEING CONTENT AND GRATEFUL.....	100
THE GIFT	100
NOT ASKING ANYTHING FROM ANYBODY	100
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	101
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	102
THRESHOLD	102
TEST YOURSELF.....	103
HOW CONTENTED ARE YOU?.....	103
EMPATHY	104
TODAY YOUR FATHER DID NOT BRING HOME ANY PROVISIONS	104
INSIDE LIFE.....	105
INTERPRETING PICTURES	105
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	106
THE BLESSING OF KHALIL IBRAHIM	106
CLASS ACTIVITY	107
THE PERIODS OF MY DEVELOPMENT AND MY COMPLAINTS	107

YOU CAN BE THE BEST.....	108
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CHAPTER 16: BEING BRAVE AND PATRIOTIC / 109

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	110
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH).....	111
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	112
BEING BRAVE AT WAR TIMES AND BEING PATRIOTIC AT THE TIMES OF PEACE...	112
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	113
MY BEST EXAMPLE FOR BRAVERY: MY BELOVED HERO, THE PROPHET	113
THE ARMY CORNERED IN A VALLEY	114
FACE TO FACE WITH THE ENEMY	115
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	116
HIS HEART MAY BE SMALL, BUT HIS COURAGE IS GREAT	117
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	117
A COURAGEOUS LADY	118
TEST YOURSELF.....	119
HOW BRAVE ARE YOU?	119
EMPATHY	120
A NICE OFFER	120
INSIDE LIFE	121
INTERPRETING PICTURES	121
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	122
GREAT VICTORIES COME WITH BRAVE COMMANDERS	122
IF I BECOME A MARTYR.....	123
CLASS ACTIVITY	124
STAGES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND EXAMPLES OF COURAGE.....	124
YOU CAN BE THE BEST.....	125

CHAPTER 17: BEING A HARDWORKING AND BEING A PERSON WHO PERSEVERES / 127

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	128
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH).....	129
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	130
WORKING IS AN ACT WORSHIP WHICH GIVES PEACE AND TRANQUILITY.....	130
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	132
MY BELOVED PROPHET IS MY BEST IDEAL OF HOW TO BE HARDWORKING AND KEEP PERSEVERANCE	132
A STRAW MAT AND A PITCHER.....	132
THE PROPHET WHO CARRIES MUD-BRICKS	133
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	134
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	135
SHOW ME THE DIRECTION TO THE MARKET!	135
CALLOUSED HANDS	135
TEST YOURSELF.....	136
HOW HARDWORKING ARE YOU?.....	136

EMPATHY	137
WHEN EVERYTHING COMES ONE AFTER ANOTHER... ..	137
INSIDE LIFE	138
INTERPRETING PICTURES	138
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	139
LIKE A BUTTERFLY	139
THE ONE-ARMED KARATE CHAMPION	139
CLASS ACTIVITY	141
IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE HARDWORKING AND PERSEVERANT UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES?	141
YOU CAN BE THE BEST	142

CHAPTER 18: RESPECT AND LOVE FOR THE TEACHER / 143

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	144
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET.....	145
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	146
THE MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE WE HAVE: OUR TEACHERS.....	146
MY BELOVED PROPHET, MY BEST EXEMPLAR IN SHOWING RESPECT AND LOVE TO THE TEACHERS	147
IS IT A QUR'ANIC CIRCLE OR A SCHOLARLY CIRCLE?	147
APPOINTING A YOUNG CHILD AS AN AMIR.....	147
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	147
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	149
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	150
THE GREATNESS OF THE TEACHER.....	150
THE REASON WHY THE MAN COVERED 1320 KM-ROAD	151
TEST YOURSELF	152
HOW MUCH IS YOUR RESPECT AND LOVE TO YOUR TEACHERS?	152
EMPATHY	153
YEARS LATER WHEN YOU SEE ONE OF YOUR TEACHERS... ..	153
INSIDE LIFE	154
INTERPRETING PICTURES	154
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	155
DIFFICULT TEST	155
CLASS ACTIVITY	156
IF I BECOME A TEACHER	156
YOU CAN BE THE BEST	157

CHAPTER 19: BEING SIDE BY SIDE WITH OUR BROTHERS IN RELIGION DURING BOTH SORROW AND HAPPINESS / 159

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	160
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH).....	161
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	162
WE WERE NOT BORN ALONE, AND WE CANNOT LIVE ALONE!	162
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	163

MY BELOVED PROPHET, MY BEST EXEMPLAR IN SHARING THE JOY AND SORROW OF HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS	163
THE CHILD WHOSE BIRD DIED.....	163
THE CHILDREN OF THE MARTYR.....	164
THE CHILDREN OF THE MARTYR.....	164
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	165
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	166
GOING BACK TO THE TORTURE	166
TEST YOURSELF.....	167
HOW MUCH ARE YOU WITH YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THEIR HAPPINESS AND SORROW?.....	167
EMPATHY	168
A DIFFICULT DAY	168
INSIDE LIFE	169
INTERPRETING PICTURES	169
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	170
DESKMATE	170
CLASS ACTIVITY	171
THE SOCIAL STRUCTURES OF COUNTRIES	171
YOU CAN BE THE BEST.....	172

CHAPTER 20: KNOWING THE MANNERS OF SPEECH / 173

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH.....	174
THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET.....	175
A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION	176
THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN HUMAN RELATIONS	176
THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"	178
MY BEST EXEMPLAR, MY BELOVED PROPHET / WHEN AISHA (R. ANHA) MADE A MISTAKE ..	178
THE PROPHET WHO KEPT HIS SILENCE.....	179
BRIEF AND TO THE POINT	180
RECOGNIZE - FEEL - DO	181
FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS	182
KEEPING A SECRET.....	182
NOT TO GET THE TONGUE ACCUSTOMED.....	183
THIS IS THE BEST WAY THAT IT CAN BE EXPRESSED	183
TEST YOURSELF.....	184
HOW MUCH ATTENTION DO YOU PAY TO THE MANNERS OF SPEECH?	184
EMPATHY	185
YOUR PARENTS HAD SUCH A BIG FIGHT.....	185
INSIDE LIFE	186
INTERPRETING PICTURES	186
STORIES FROM REAL LIFE	187
CITY BUS	187
CLASS ACTIVITY	189
YOU CAN BE THE BEST.....	191

PREFACE

The fundamentals of our faith, the acts of worship, the ethical principles, our cordial customs and traditions, and other cultural elements form our basic values. All these values have been nourished from the divine source and have reached their magnificent peak in the light of the prophetic principles and subtleties. Throughout the centuries, these have achieved perfection as a system of merits within the Islamic civilization.

Today, the Muslim world has an endless treasure to raise up the unique personalities who will rebuild the strongest civilization of the history of humankind. What needs to be done is obvious. What we need to find out is not what we need to do but rather how we will do it. In other words, how will all our values and our dynamics transform into merits for our young whom we raise? By using which ways and methods will we be able to continue to live with our values for ourselves and for our future generations?

Of course today, the most vital responsibility of our mothers, fathers and educationists is to raise the children and the young who carry the fundamental principles of Islam and our values. The book **“A Muslim’s Character”** is the result of such a quest and effort.

We have paid attention to the fact that this book, which we hope will be a reference book that our children (age eleven and up) may enjoy reading, is a guide book for our parents, and a supplementary textbook for our teacher in their classes of education of values, we have also tried to make sure that this is both a book of information and also a book of activities that can be done both individually and in a group.

In the first volume in which we have dealt with ten fundamental values, you will find **according to the children’s developmental characteristics and levels;**

- i. The interpretations of the verses from the Qur’an and the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) related to the subject matter,
- ii. Concepts related to the value in question and their explanations,
- iii. Best examples from the lives of our beloved Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions,
- iv. Exemplary events from the lives of great Muslims,
- v. Remarkable stories from the contemporary world,
- vi. Activities that children can do by themselves when they read the book on their own,
- vii. Plays and activities that can be played in the class,
- viii. Practices suitable to the techniques that increase emotional and spiritual awareness,
- ix. Activities of hands-on learning that will ensure more lasting knowledge,
- x. Tests of measuring, understanding, and evaluating it in every chapter.

We pray to Allah to accept the sincere intentions and efforts of those who contributed to this book, the educationists, and the young people. May Allah make those successful who are on the path of becoming a good servant and those who raise up good servants of Allah.

Editor
Faruk Kanger, PhD

INTRODUCTION

1. MORALITY EDUCATION IN ISLAM

When we examine the history of the Islamic civilization, we can see that Islam treats and weaves all aspects of believers' individual and social lives like embroidery. Islamic principles of creed, acts of worship, and ethical values have penetrated deep into Muslim societies and the great personalities brought up in this civilization have had the honor to be the architects, the masters, and the workers in building this fourteen century old magnificent civilization. The values upon which the Islamic civilization has risen have always been suitable to human nature and disposition and constituted the values of the middle path away from all kinds of excessiveness. Because the greatness, magnificence, firmness, and durability of a structure is directly related to the quality of its plan, foundations, and materials. If it were not so, how would it be possible to raise thousands of scholars like Khulafa al-Rashidun, Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafii, Piri Reis, Ali Kuşçu, Kindi, Avicenna, Farabi, Averroes, Ghazali, Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, Yavus Sultan Selim, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman, Fatih Sultan Mehmed, Architect Sinan, Ibn Arabi, Imam Rabbani, Ibn Khaldun, Haji Khalifa, Elmalılı Muhammed Hamdi and many more great men whose names it is not possible to count here? To raise so many statesmen who regarded serving Islam and the Muslims as their obligation and to have so many personalities praised by all of humankind who were monuments of merits throughout Muslim lands from Far East to Caucasus, from Central Asia to Africa proves this fact.

The spiritual values upon which those meritorious personalities were raised after the generation of the Companions who were raised under the personal care of Allah's Messenger have lost nothing from their values and authenticity for centuries. They are before us as fresh and robust as they were in the Age of Bliss. Here is the Holy Qur'an, which challenges the ages, which has been written over the consciousness of the humankind by the pen of nature, which is still like it is being re-revealed today. Here are the thousands of blessed hadiths which illuminate our dark world as if they have been just been lived and spoken. Here are the blessed Companions who take their energy and light from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and are like the stars which always guide humankind. As long as we continue to be on the right path and continue our struggle to attain the merits, they will continue to become lights illuminating our paths.

The principles of our faith, our acts of worship, our ethical principles, our cordial customs and traditions and our other cultural factors form our fundamental values. All these values have been nourished from the divine source and have reached their magnificent peak in the light of prophetic principles and subtleties. Throughout centuries, these have achieved perfection as a system of merits within the Islamic civilization. The most important question is not what we need to do but rather how we will do it. In other words, how will all our values and our dynamics transform into merits on us? How will we continue to live those merits in our personalities?

The answers that we will find for these questions will also define our essential task of servanthood. Because Allah, the Almighty, who says **“They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong; and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works: They are in the ranks of the righteous”** (Al Imran, 3: 114) reminds us of our main duty as a believer and shows us the way to fulfill it. As seen in this verse, the values related to faith which constitutes the foundations of personality are mentioned first and right after them the merits are counted, which are the forms of those creedal values transformed into action. Another very important matter is that there is no maximum limit to reach in merits. “Hastening in emulation in all good works” clearly expresses this fact. In another verse, **“O you who believe! If any from among you turn back from his faith, soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him, lowly with the believers, mighty against the rejecters, fighting in the way of Allah, and never afraid of the reproaches of such as find fault. That is the grace of Allah, which He will bestow on whom He pleases. And Allah encompasses all, and He knows all things.”** (al-Mai’dah, 5: 54) In this verse, Allah tells us what we will face when we lose our characteristic to attain creedal values and then to transform them into merits, which is the reason of our creation and our main responsibility.

Of course, education of human beings is difficult. It is also hard to discipline the inner selves. When our aim is to become or to raise individuals with strong characters who have achieved moral virtues, it becomes a more arduous and longer process. Just as the people’s education continues from their birth to their death, they also do not have the luxury to prefer one stage of their lives to another, in other words their infancy to their childhood or their youth to their adulthood. This is because the character education encompasses all stages of life and presents continuity. We do not have the luxury to prefer a specific stage of life since we do not really know in which stage of it we are while we are in it. In respect to a character education or moral education, every stage is as important as our current moment. In other words, the value of any stage of life is as much as we can appreciate it. Of course, this reality does not require us to ignore the fact that it is much easier and more effective to discipline a character at a young age.

The religious and spiritual values that we have encompass our social, economic, familial, and personal life, in short all aspects of our lives. This is the general formation of Islam. Islam is not a religion that can be practiced alone at home or in any other place. When we examine the obligatory acts of worship commanded by Islam, we can see that the acts of worship such as prayer, pilgrimage, and almsgiving except for fasting, all have wide social dimensions and can be performed in a social environment. The month of Ramadan, when the believers fast, also has features such as breaking fasting, charity, **tarawih** prayer, and the festival at the end of Ramadan that brings the social values forward. This is a necessary part for a religion that declares brotherhood among its believers who live all around the world and sees the whole of humankind as an extended family.

A good personality and a strong character can rise only upon merits. Merits, on the other hand, develop by living with the right attitudes in a balanced and moderate manner, which are gained by means of long years of consistent actions through the dimensions of thought, feeling, and behavior.

In simple terms, living a life based upon the right knowledge, thoughts and behaviors with good intention for a long time in a consistent manner prepares the suitable ground for the development of right attitudes. The positive attitudes are directed to what is positive and good, in other words, the composition of meritorious behaviors is gained during this process as merits, which compose part of the character. The coherent wholeness of the merits constitutes an individual's character. Eventually, these characteristic features become the elements forming the integrity of personality.

This scene, which demonstrates that a person's knowledge, thinking, and behaviors builds his personality by passing through stages, also shows how difficult and long process character education is. After striving for long years in the same direction, a person who has a coherent and consistent harmony between his knowledge, thoughts, and actions may develop the desired behaviors and habits. Such behaviors and habits turn into merits (such as compassion, mercy, modesty, generosity, justice, etc.) to the extent that he supports them with his belief, values, desires and practices them, and is self-consistent. His character starts to take shape and his personality begins to be formed.

According this, the moral education in Islam is

1. The effort to attain and help other attain the merits desired by Islam within the system of values of Islam
2. Values can be realized by the merits that have been properly learned and practiced in life. This is because the right behaviors can be attained by right knowledge.
3. It is a conscious activity carried out by individuals' personal will and desires. Because no one can educate a person who does not want to be educated.
4. It is an education with two dimensions which take place both inwardly from a person towards his inner self (disciplining one's self) and from the environment towards the person (transfer of knowledge and culture).
5. It is not an education that can be carried out in just a special time period, at school, or a specific period of life. Moral Education is a process carried out from birth to death in all periods of our lives with the same significance.
6. It is not an activity that we do by sparing some special time to do it in our daily life. On the contrary, the desire to attain merits should be a continuously living idea kept in mind.
7. One's home, business place, school, and every other place in the external environment are places of learning and the application for the moral education attained.
8. It is an education that needs exemplary person or personalities. Such exemplary personalities may be alive or may have lived in the past.
9. Because it is an education centered on the learner, everything begins and ends at the person who gets the education.
10. It is a long process, which requires the person to be vigilant and patient. Asking to get fast results might affect the process negatively.

2. BEING AN EXAMPLE (ROLE MODEL) IN MORAL EDUCATION

A. Children's Taking Others as Examples (Taking Others as Role Models) According to The Stages of Their Development

As soon as one comes to this world, the person's physical, spiritual, and social development begins. Because children are completely depended upon their parents in the early years of their childhood, the parents are very strong role models for the children's development. The formation of children's innate skills takes place by parent's attitudes and interactions. Children's psychological and physical dependency upon their parents in the early periods of their childhood gradually decreases in their later age. The decrease in their social dependency requires a longer process. While children between the ages of 0-2 are more depended upon their mothers, they start to enjoy the pleasure of independence and to feel the delight of doing things by themselves between the ages of 3-5. Parents should find the balance between leaving their children unattended and leaving them independent. The right messages given and the correct behaviors shown to children by their parents and other adults around them play an important role in children's attainment of right behaviors, expressing their feelings, determining their social relationship with other people and development of their personality. Because the child at this stage would only reflect the social behaviors displayed to him in his family life, and he would repeat the experiences that make him happy and give up the ones in accordance with the reaction he gets from his environment.

The interaction between children and their parents is of course not a one way stream. It is a mutual process of socialization in which parents are also affected by their children.¹ The common result reached by the research on the parent-children relationships is that the parents' interaction with their children has a strong determining role in children's physical, mental, emotional, and social development and in the shaping of their personality. The research has especially demonstrated that the behaviors of the mothers who spend more time and are closer to their children compared to the fathers are more influential on children's behavior than the fathers'.² Therefore, the attention paid, the time spent and the affinity shown by the parents and the other adults close to the child make them exemplary personalities for the children.

As for school age children between the ages of 6-10, the physical development at this time has been slowed down, while the process of development of their skills accelerates. The child, whose social development is accelerated by the basic feeling of safety the child gets from his family, now needs to learn not only to take but to give back what he takes.³ The child establishes a strong relationship with his teacher who embraces the child with the affinity of a mother and lives in an interaction with him at the level of emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. The child establishes similar ties with his friends, other teachers, and school administrators and develops attitudes towards the values of the school. In the child's social development, his interaction with his peers plays a role as important as his gained

1. Adnan Kulaksızoğlu, *Ergenlik Psikolojisi*, p. 82-83.

2. Adnan Kulaksızoğlu, *Ergenlik Psikolojisi*, p. 115.

3. Doğan Cüceloğlu, *İnsan ve Davranışı*, p. 358.

social skills.⁴ During this period, the child's class teacher, his close friends, and his other teachers are exemplary people (role models.)

At the age of 11 and during the period of puberty, the child's social environment expands, his mental, social, and moral development becomes as important as his physical development. During those years, being in the same gender group or in the opposite gender group, the social, economic, and cultural level of his group, and the messages and meanings he gets from this group become influential on his development. The attitudes of the parents with regards to this period is normally characterized with terms such as "equalitarian-democratic", "excessively protective-interfering", and "excessively authoritarian-oppressive", which play a determinative role in the child's development.

Moreover, in order to see the positive or negative influences and the power of the effects of the role models such as the social and mass media on the young, it is enough to observe how much time the children in this period spend in front of the television, the computer, the tablets, their cell-phones, and their radios. It is also very clear what kind of a knowledge they get from these mediums, and how dependent and addicted they are to imitating the people and the life styles they see on those mediums.

B. Identification (Interaction with) of an Exemplary Personality in an Effective Moral Education

Moral Education is a long term process of interaction in which parents and teachers undertake serious responsibilities. In this process, it is necessary to organize learning and teaching activities according to the children's personal characteristics, nature, potential abilities, and learning characteristics. There are also certain principles that **"the exemplary personalities"** who are at the position of teaching need to have. These are,

1. They need to be reliable and trustworthy: Being reliable and trustworthy requires the person to always speak the truth, to be sincere, and not to be selfish. Trust cannot be achieved in relationships which always target personal benefits and self-interests.

2. They need to be experts in their fields: People with high cultural level, strong professional knowledge and formation, who have received a good education, and whose deep insight are trusted are the ones with strong persuasive skills and of high standing.

3. They should be respected people: Respectability is not only something that is related to a person's personality and high morality but also the ability of paying attention to the addressees and showing them respect also increases one's respectability. No matter what the situation of a student is, seeing the humanistic respect he deserves from his teacher makes it easier to communicate with him.

4. They should be loved in the society: It is easy for a loved teacher to be imitated and taken as an exemplary. Children try to be like the people they love. Even though being loved is directly related to one's good morality and character, one should not ignore the role of physical appearance and the attire in this matter. Because not being loved will be perceived as a deficiency of the exemplary person's qualifications and trustworthiness, it will also increase the possibility of the rejection of the messages that he tries to give. Because of

4. Neil R. Carlson, Psychology, The Science of Behavior, p. 334.

this, it is necessary for a teacher that he should make himself loved by his trustworthiness, integrity, and sincerity.

5. They should be known as good people by their actions and their knowledge and actions should be consistent with each other: The fact that an exemplary personality's personal characteristics and skills are well known by the ones who try to take them as examples ensures the proper interpretation of the messages and knowledge that he provides. It is also necessary for the exemplary personality to know the audience and masses he addresses. Knowing well the addressees' level of knowledge and culture, economic level and personal traits makes the exemplary person's task easier and minimizes the risk to make mistakes. Moreover, a teachers' application of what he knows in his life and consistency between his words and actions is an important characteristic that those who take him as an example want to see in him.

6. There should be common aspects between the lives of the exemplary people and the ones who take them as examples: It is an advantage for the moral education for the exemplary people and the ones who take them as examples to share the same cultural aspects of the same society between them. Sharing the same values, living with the same problems, having similar approaches and views on similar incidents and phenomena are factors that increase the influence of being a positive model.

7. They should have the ability and skills to teach and communicate: Establishing good communication with people, being able to reach their worlds of feelings and thoughts, being able to give right messages, and being able to use gestures and mimics in a consistent manner are things that require good communication skills. It is possible for the teachers who have such communication skills to achieve the desired success in education. It is necessary for a teacher to succeed in his job by choosing the correct strategy for his students and for the subject he teaches, and using the teaching methods and techniques suitable to the strategy he has chosen.

3. CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF AN EDUCATOR OF MORAL EDUCATION

It is required for an educator who assumes the moral education to have the following characteristics:

1. He should have strong power of perception and intuition, be a person who knows himself, brave and in the center of attraction.
2. He should be able to control himself, know how to act with the feeling of responsibility, and be able to reach conclusions from causes with due diligence.
3. He should give his attention to his task, keep his peace and tranquility, and focus on the work he wants to succeed.
4. He should be confident about himself, be hopeful and patient, and never lose his determination, hope, and resolution in reaching his goal.
5. He should have a compassionate, merciful, tolerant, forgiving, and corrective approach.

6. He should always be generous, self-sacrificing, and benevolent.

7. He should be understanding to the people around him, prefer to consult and cooperate, and be willing in his job.

8. He should avoid pride and showing off and be a simple person. He should show modest attitudes with elegance and politeness.

9. He should never make concessions regarding trustworthiness, sincerity, honesty, and brevity. He should be a trustworthy person by maintaining his veracity and honesty.

10. He should be someone respecting himself, tactful, and loved and respected by others. He should pay attention to his appearance.

11. He should always be balanced, prudent, tolerant and have a moderate life style with inner peace.

12. He should be hardworking, zealous, industrious, sure for his success, tolerant, and perseverant.

13. He should always prefer the better and the best one, but accept facilitating as a principle. He should not blemish the purity of his heart and intention.

14. He should be understanding and sensitive towards people. He should be a philanthropist and respectful to all aspects of human life.

15. He should be someone who controls his inner self, obeys commands and prohibitions, stays on the right, the straight, and the stable path.

16. He should not forget the true purpose of life and ultimate responsibility. He should use the skills and means given to him by Allah, the Almighty, and should not lose his consciousness of serving others.

17. He should be someone who is aware of the fact that everyone has a free will and freedom, and submit himself to divine will. He should be someone who can be content with what happens to him.

18. He should be enterprising, open to novelties, brave, and vigilant. He should be able to perceive life with its current, past, and future dimensions and plan his life accordingly.⁵

4. FIFTY SUGGESTIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE MORAL EDUCATION AT SCHOOL⁶

1. Prepare a guidance program for the students regarding their morality and character development.

2. Hang pictures of exemplary personalities who are famous by their characters and self-sacrifices in halls and classrooms.

3. Develop programs to discover the students' personal skills.

5. Faruk Kanger, *Peygamber Ahlakını Referans Alan Karakter Eğitimi*, p. 60, Erkam Publishing, 2010.

6. See, selected and adapted from "100 Ways to Promote Character Education," Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character, Boston University, ISACS UPDATE, Winter, 94"

4. Invite and give parents a chance to contribute to your character education program
5. Choose a personal motto defining your vision and mission and share it with your students.
6. Help students to see that the "good" in students is at least as important as the academic success.
7. Treat ethical issues and solve the problems together with your students.
8. Structure opportunities for your students to do service in the community.
9. Lead by example. For instance, pick up the discarded piece of paper in the hall. Clean the chalkboard out of respect for the next teacher.
10. Do not permit swearing, vulgar or obscene language in classrooms or anywhere else on school property.
11. Be in touch with the parents to praise the children's good behaviors.
12. Be kind and understanding in your dealings with faculty colleagues.
13. Introduce "self-sacrificing and important local heroes" in your classes.
14. Reinforce the moral authority of parents. Ensure students to solve their moral problems together with their parents.
15. Have sayings on the wall that encourage good character.
16. Celebrate birthdays of heroes and heroines and discuss their accomplishments and merits.
17. Make classroom expectations clear, and hold students accountable for them.
18. Strive to be consistent in dealings with students; avoid allowing personal feelings to interfere with fairness.
19. Admit your mistakes and seek to correct them. Expect and encourage students to do the same.
20. Read aloud a "a Couple of Minute Story" every day to begin or end the school day. Choose stories that are brief, yet value-centered. Give a chance to a couple of students to speak about the lessons taken out of the story.
21. Consider ethical implications when establishing classroom and school policies and procedures; be aware of what messages they send to students.
22. Explain the reasons for a particular school or classroom policy, action, or decision. Help students to understand "why," not just "what."
23. Prepare grounds for the students to discuss the ethical and character-developing elements of being a good student.
24. Talk to your students about why you are a teacher. Explain how you understand the importance and responsibility of teaching.
25. Let your students know about your community service. Tell them what they can do in which voluntary institution.

26. Teach students to analyze the media critically. For example, ask them the question “what kind of a character the messages of media should encourage.”

27. Bring your recent graduates back to talk about their successful transitions to college, work, or their experiences. Ask them how their habits helped in their works.

28. Invite local adults and bring the concept of their character education and experiences to the agenda.

29. Help students develop empathy.

30. When conflicts arise at school, teach students the importance of respect, open-mindedness, privacy, and discretion. Do not allow conversations that are fueled by gossip or disrespect.

31. Overtly teach courtesy. Teach students how to listen attentively to other students and adults, and to avoid interrupting people.

32. Prepare opportunities to allow older students to assist younger ones.

33. Give students sufficient feedback when evaluating their work. Do not forget that ingenuity relies on attention.

34. Prepare opportunities for students to do small services (such as small repairs, presentations, etc.)

35. Stand up for the “underdog” when he or she is being treated unfairly. Use this as a teaching moment.

36. Inform your students about the programs such as movies, theatres etc. that support good character throughout the country.

37. With parental and your students’ support, have students serve your environment by services such as picking up litter, growing plants, or doing small repairs.

38. Have your school have a school song. Teach this song and its meaning to the new comers.

39. Emphasize and teach the significance of school principles. Talk about the importance of these principles for the identity of your institution.

40. Emphasize good sportsmanship in sports, games, and daily interactions with others.

41. When making school policy, allow students’ participation and responsibility in some decisions. Have them research the various ramifications of different policies and present their findings to the administrators and faculty for decisions.

42. Include in faculty/staff meetings and workshops discussions of the school’s “moral climate,” and determine the desired goals for the moral life of the school.

43. Develop a “School Code of Ethics.” Refer to it in all school activity and policy. Disseminate it to all school members. Display it prominently throughout the building.

44. By means of school bulletin, let the parents know about the remarkable behaviors of your students.

45. Institute a dress code and explain its role in promoting an educational environment conducive to learning.
46. Organize activities that provide opportunities for socialization among the students.
47. Create opportunities for parents and students to work together on a school project: for example, symposium, dinner, or field trip.
48. Put some individuals in charge of guiding newly hired personnel and entering students.
49. Prepare for parents and students a literature list about good character education.
50. Always be in search for a better character education and renew yourself.

5. A SAMPLE OF WEEKLY CURRICULUM AND APPLICATION OF THE METHODS

In educating moral values, by paying attention to the materials in hand, a teacher's selection of correct and suitable methods and techniques according to the students' development, their cultural and knowledge levels is vital for the realization of the goals he aims to achieve.

Below, there are three samples for planning a sample course, selection of its materials, preparation and application of its contents. In order to be a guide for the usage of the book, these planning tables which presents different methods have been prepared with the perception of directives.

1. SAMPLE SUBJECT (MERCY)

The Title of the Activity	Let us interpret the picture
Subjects / Values	Being merciful
Achievements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The student is able to recognize the feeling of mercy in his heart. 2) The student is able to think about the state of hungry animals living on the streets such as cats, birds, etc. and is able to empathize with them. 3) The student is able to recognize the needs of the living beings around him and seeks ways to help them.
Method	Interpretation of pictures
Duration	Forty minutes
Grade level	Age eight and up (second grade)
References	"Mercy" p. 44-45 Series of Religious Values, (DIB publications 2014)
Materials	Photograph / Poster / Digital Image (Both pictures will be shown to the students simultaneously)



- a. What do you see in the pictures?
- b. What do you think the little birds in the first picture need most?
- c. What do you think the mother and her child in the second picture need most?
- d. What would the mother and her child in the second picture be thinking about right now?
- e. What would happen to the chicks if there were no mercy and compassion of the mother bird towards them?
- f. Whose mercy does the little child sitting in his mother's lap need? Why?
- g. What would you do if the door in front of which the mother and her child sits in the picture were the door of your home?
- h. What would they feel if you gave them some food and money?

Steps of the activity

- 1) Displaying the pictures either as posters or in digital format in places where they can be easily seen.
- 2) Guiding the students by asking questions in accordance with the stages of information, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- 3) Finishing by the stage of creating values (evaluation).
- 4) Strengthening the awareness of the students and the values they have attained.

Evaluation

Self-evaluation: At the end of the activity, the teacher asks the students questions, which lead to self-evaluation.

Teacher-evaluation: The teacher observes the level of realization of the achievements at the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions.

Observation of the family: The family is informed before the activity and their observations and thoughts are asked for after the activity.

Directives

FIRST STEP

Display the pictures in poster or digital format at a place that can be easily seen.

SECOND STEP

Ask these questions to as many different students as is needed until getting satisfactory answers.

THIRD STEP

Write the students' explanations and deductions on the board or have the students write them.

FOURTH STEP

Strengthen the outcomes towards the achievement of values. Give advice encouraging mercy.

2. SAMPLE SUBJECT (JUSTICE)

The Title of the Activity	What would I feel? What would I do?															
Subjects / Values	Justice (Observing others’ rights).															
Achievements	1) The students should have learnt and know that they must not hurt others by their words and actions. 2) The students should be able to understand that when they use other people’s property it should be not be damaged. 3) The students should be able to comprehend the importance of paying attention to not harm others by their words and behaviors.															
Method	Creative Writing															
Duration	Forty minutes															
Grade level	Age eight and up (second and third grades)															
References	Inventive															
Materials	<div><div>YOU ARE A PERSON WHO PAYS ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS WHAT WOULD YOU FEEL AND DO IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS?</div><table><tr><td>CASE</td><td>FEELING</td><td>BEHAVIOR</td></tr><tr><td>If I find a pencil on the ground in school</td><td>Thinking that “whoever lost it would probably be very sad,”</td><td>I give the pencil to our teacher to find its owner.</td></tr><tr><td>After I return from shopping, if I find out that I was given one dollar extra in change</td><td>Even though I think “it is not an important amount,”</td><td>I would certainly take it back to the market saying that it is not my money.</td></tr><tr><td>If I break my friend’s pencil accidentally and nobody sees what happened</td><td>I think that Allah the Almighty sees everything and this is a violation of my friend’s right, I should let him know and apologize.</td><td>.....</td></tr><tr><td>When I was waiting my turn in the queue at the school cafeteria, my friend moves ahead of the queue and stands behind me,</td><td>.....</td><td>.....</td></tr></table></div>	CASE	FEELING	BEHAVIOR	If I find a pencil on the ground in school	Thinking that “whoever lost it would probably be very sad,”	I give the pencil to our teacher to find its owner.	After I return from shopping, if I find out that I was given one dollar extra in change	Even though I think “it is not an important amount,”	I would certainly take it back to the market saying that it is not my money.	If I break my friend’s pencil accidentally and nobody sees what happened	I think that Allah the Almighty sees everything and this is a violation of my friend’s right, I should let him know and apologize.	When I was waiting my turn in the queue at the school cafeteria, my friend moves ahead of the queue and stands behind me,
CASE	FEELING	BEHAVIOR														
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When I was waiting my turn in the queue at the school cafeteria, my friend moves ahead of the queue and stands behind me,														

..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....	I would immediately apologize and try to clean his t-shirt.
.....
.....

Steps of the activity

- 1) The concepts of justice and "other people's rights" are explained.
- 2) Activity papers are given and the students are asked to fill them out.
- 3) The answers are taken from as many students as possible
- 4) The good and appropriate answers are rewarded with appreciation.

Evaluation

Self-evaluation: At the end of the activity, the teacher asks the students questions directed towards their self-evaluation.

Teacher-evaluation: The teacher observes the level of realization of the achievements at the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions.

Observation of the family: The family is informed before the activity and their observations and thoughts are asked for after the activity.

Directives

FIRST STEP

Explain the concepts of "Justice, fairness, and other people's rights."

SECOND STEP

Give the activity paper to the students in the form of a table and ask them to give their answers in writing as they wish.

THIRD STEP

Ask the students to read the parts they have filled and appreciate the good and right answers.

FOURTH STEP

Ask the students how they decided on their individual answers and what the reason was for this decision when they were filling in the missing parts.

3. SAMPLE SUBJECT (HONESTY)

The Title of the Activity	The honest person is never sorry about his or her actions.
Subjects / Values	Honesty, trustworthiness
Achievements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The student learns that honesty means not to tell lies but the truth and to keep promises that are made. 2) The student is able to learn and know that telling lies even if it is a joke is not acceptable for a person with good character. 3) The student is able to realize that one who is not honest gives the greatest harm to himself. 4) The students are able to learn to avoid the words and acts that might betray one's trust.
Method	Interpreting events.
Duration	Forty minutes
Grade level	Age eight and up (second and third grades)
References	The incident mentioned in Darimi, Buyu', hadith no 10 has been narrated by adapting it to the modern day.
Materials	<p>Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) would sometimes go to the market and visit the tradesmen. One day, he went to the market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did that? While there, he saw a sack of wheat in front of a store. He approached the sack and put his hand inside it and felt dampness under the surface, although the wheat on the surface seemed dry. • Do you think the owner of the store was aware of the situation? Why? Allah's Messenger asked the seller, — Why did you hide the damp part of the wheat? • Why do you think the owner of the store did that? • Which type of wheat, damp or dry, would be heavier on the scale? • Would staying damp damage foods like wheat, rice, etc.? • What would be the answer of the owner of the store? Why? The seller did not know what to say. Ashamed of being caught by the Prophet (pbuh), the man just said, "It may have gotten wet by the rain this morning." The Prophet said, • What do you think our Prophet said or did? — Why did you not put the rain-damaged food on top so that people could see it!

- **What do you think the seller said or did after that? Why?**
The seller could not say anything. It was obvious that the Prophet did not approve of such an action. He reproved the seller saying,
— A Muslim does not cheat people. Whoever cheats amongst us is not one of us.
- **What do you think the seller did afterwards? What should be his decision?**
- **What should a person who cheats people but then regrets his action do? Why?**
- **How does being honest and trustworthy affect people's relationships?**

Steps of the activity

- The actual incident is presented step by step.
- The students' views and interpretations are asked for.
- The students are guided by asking questions in accordance with the stages of information, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- The activity is finished with the stage of creating values (evaluation)

Evaluation

Self-evaluation: At the end of the activity, the teacher asks the students questions directed towards self-evaluation.

Teacher-evaluation: The teacher observes the level of realization of the achievements at the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions.

Observation of the family: The family is informed before the activity and their observations and thoughts are asked for after the activity.

Directives

FIRST STEP

Start narrating the educational material that you have prepared in a way that draws students' attention and motivates them.

SECOND STEP

Before every question, stop narrating the incident and ask the questions to the students and get their answers. If you do not get the answers you are expecting, tell your own view and then continue the narration.

THIRD STEP

Because the questions are prepared in accordance with the stages of information, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, continue to get answers from the students until you think all those steps have been achieved.

FOURTH STEP

Complete the activity when you feel satisfied with the answers that you received in accordance with the achievements expected at the stage of evaluation (creating values).

CHAPTER 11

A decorative horizontal line with a wavy, dotted pattern. On the left side, there is a small blue tulip flower with a green stem and a green swirl.

BEING FAIR (TO ALL CREATION)

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and generosity to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that you may receive admonition."
(al-Nahl, 16: 90)

Not to treat anybody with injustice is the command of my Lord; I will pay attention not to treat anyone amongst creation wrongfully

"O ye who believe! Be ever steadfast in your devotion to Allah, bearing witness to the truth in all equity; and never let hatred of any-one lead you into the sin of deviating from justice..."
(al-Ma'ida, 5: 8)

I may sometimes be very angry at those who are around me. I will pay attention to my anger so that it does not lead me into the sin of deviating from justice!

"Allah commands you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; And when you judge between man and man, that you judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He gives you! For Allah is He Who hears and sees all things." (al-Nisa, 4: 58)

Sometimes we may need to adjudicate between our friends or between other people. I should not confer privilege on anybody with regards to the matters of justice.

"Hence, if you have to respond to an attack (in argument), respond only to the extent of the attack levelled against you; but to bear yourselves with patience is indeed far better for (you, since Allah is with) those who are patient in adversity."
(al-Nahl, 16: 126)

If I have to respond to a wrong deed carried out against me, I am only allowed to respond equivalently. However, if I act with patience and forgiveness, my Lord will be more pleased and content with me.

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH)

MY PROPHET SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"Allah Almighty punishes some sins in this world and some others in the Hereafter. However, He punishes oppression and injustice both in this world and in the Hereafter."
(al-Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 57)

If I carry out injustice, I will face its reprimand both in this world and in the afterlife. May Allah protect us from such an end! I would not want to be ruined both in this world and in the afterlife.

"When the Prophet (pbuh) would leave his house, he would say: "In the Name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah. O Allah! We seek refuge in You from slipping unintentionally or becoming misguided, or committing oppression or being oppressed, or acting ignorantly or being treated ignorantly."
(al-Tirmidhi, Da'awat, 35)

I will neither treat anybody with injustice nor let anybody treat me with injustice.

"The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Allah will give shade, to seven, on the Day when there will be no shade but His. (One of these seven persons is) a just ruler."
(al-Bukhari, Adhan, 36)

Being just and managing people's affairs fairly merits Allah's protection. I will act justly when resolving any issue found amongst my siblings and friends.

"The Prophet (pbuh) said: Three supplications are answered, and there being no doubt about them; that of a mother, that of a traveller and that of one who has been wronged."
(Abu Dawud, Witr, 29)

I will try to acquire the supplications of my mother, of a person who has been wronged, and of a traveler. I will pay attention to doing justice, especially towards these types of people. I will never treat anybody with injustice.

"O people! Behold! Your Lord is One. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; a white has no superiority over a black, nor does a black have any superiority over a white; [none have superiority over another] except by piety and good action." (Ibn Hanbal, 5/411)

As no one is superior to any other person in terms of their value as a human being, I should not consider anyone to be superior to anyone else and not give any preference to any person over any other.

A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE JUST IF IT IS NOT ABOUT EQUAL TREATMENT?

Very few people may not have heard the renowned saying “Solitude is unique to Allah only.” It is evident that people live in social groups, of which the smallest unit is called family. Individuals experience a sense of safety and happiness when living in a social group, such as a family, a district, a village, a town, a city, a country, and lastly, globally. How can people live in peace and harmony within a social group? The answer is that it is justice, conveyed by the rules of religion, morality, and law, that is the most powerful force that leads to peace and tranquillity in a society.

Justice means to put everything in its rightful place and give to everyone and everything whatever it rightfully deserves. Distinguishing between right and wrong can be accomplished through justice. Due to its significance, our religion commands us to be just in our actions and behaviours. Our religion instructs us to be just to everybody - equally just - as human beings without making any discrimination based on rank, knowledge, culture, gender, religious affiliation, ethnicity or race.

However, it is important to recognise that equal treatment may not always represent justice. On the contrary, sometimes justice dictates to act disproportionately. Why? For example, every pupil in a class is equal for the teacher. In other words, the rules of the class are binding for all the pupils. However, giving a different test to a blind student is a just conduct even if it means treating students disproportionately. Our Prophet (pbuh) commanded parents to treat their children equally and to be just towards them. For example, imagine that you were two siblings at the age of three and fifteen. Due to the difference between your years and capabilities, neither your nutritional needs nor your educational needs are alike. Is this not true? Therefore, every identical treatment, however equal, does not mean that it is just.

Just as we should not let anybody wrong us, we should not keep silent when we witness someone carry out something wrong within our family or within the wider world. We should raise our voice and defend the rights of the oppressed. This is a requirement of being a just person. We should both try to make people treat us justly, and we should never treat others unjustly.

Another important issue about justice is that it should be dispensed in a timely manner. That is because the worst type of justice is the one that arrives too late. If the verdict in a case is given late, even if the verdict is just, it becomes just another type of injustice. When we witness an injustice, we should immediately side with the righteousness, and should not prolong the pain of the person who is being wronged.

Being fair in our behaviours and deeds is a principle which is applicable for all people, animals and other beings living around us. Helping an ill kitten and giving it some milk means showing fairness to it. Expressing thought such as “since I do not give milk to other cats, then I should not give it to this one either” signifies the mistreatment of that poor animal. Moreover, not harming plants, trees, and insects and not wasting and polluting our resources, such as air and water, are also ways of displaying fairness to our environment.

Even though it is hard to be fair in our actions and behaviours, it gives us peace of mind and tranquillity in the end. Those who carry out injustice may achieve some temporary gains, but regret and disappointment await them in the end. Of course, even though many people become pleased when we act fairly, we cannot achieve this result for everyone. After all, tyrants and bullies do not like justice and fairness. However, gaining the pleasure and love of Allah is the highest and most peaceful objective for us as Muslims. The world can only become a civilised place when justice is set and inequities are eliminated.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM “THE BEST ONE”

THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH (PBUH) DID NOT TREAT EQUALLY!

Abdullah b. Mas’ud (r.a.) narrates:
On the day of Hunayn, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) showed preference (to some) people in the distribution of the spoils. He bestowed on Aqra’ b. Habis one hundred camels, and bestowed an equal (number) upon ‘Uyayna b. Hins, and bestowed on people among the elites of Arabia, and preferred them (to others) on that day, in the distribution of spoils.

In your opinion, what would be the reasons for the Prophet (pbuh) giving more of the spoils of war to some people?

.....
.....

In your opinion, how might the Prophet (pbuh) have felt at that moment?

.....
.....

Upon this a person said:

- By Allah, neither justice has been done in this distribution (of spoils), nor has the pleasure of Allah been sought in it.

I said,

- “By Allah, I will certainly inform the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) about it. I came to him and informed him about what he had said.

The colour of his (the Prophet’s) face changed red like blood and he then said

- “Who would do justice, if Allah and His Messenger do not do justice?” He further said:

- “May Allah have mercy upon Moses; he was tormented more than this, but he showed patience.

Is it really possible that Allah’s Messenger did an injustice? Why?

.....
.....

I felt very sad that I had made the Prophet upset with the news that I delivered to him. From that day on, I promised myself not to convey anybody’s unpleasant words to the Holy Prophet. (al-Bukhari, Adab, 53; Muslim, Zakat, 145)

EVEN IF MY DAUGHTER DOES!

During the time of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) there was a tribe called the Sons of Mahzum. It was a well-known and respected tribe among the people. A woman from that tribe committed theft. The punishment for theft was very severe. The Prophet (pbuh) was informed about the issue. People felt uneasy by the thought of someone from such a respected tribe being punished so severely. Therefore, they sent a group of eminent people as an envoy to the Prophet (pbuh) to ask not to apply the punishment of that crime. They sent Usama b. Zayd (r.a.) to the Prophet (pbuh). People thought that since Allah's Messenger loved Usama so much he might heed his words.

Usama said:

- "O Messenger of Allah! The Sons of Mahzum are very sad. This incident will destroy their reputation. Would it be possible for you to forgive that lady?"

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) got very cross and sad at the same time. How was it possible that Usama would come to him and ask him to judge with injustice? He then responded to Usama's request with the following exemplary words:

- "O people! The nations before you went astray because if a noble person committed a crime, they used to leave him, but if a weak person among them committed a crime, they used to inflict the legal punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatima, my daughter, committed theft, I would not hesitate to punish her!" (al-Bukhari, Hudud, 12)

What kind of consequences may arise if people apply different rules for the powerful and the weak amongst them?

How and why would a father approve of his child being punished?



RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO



How would a true believer act in the following situations?

SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
If I realize that my teacher graded my test higher than I deserve...	I think that it is not what I merit...	I go to my teacher and ask him to correct my grade even if this works against me.
When I am waiting at the end of a long line, and if I see someone that I know is waiting in front of the line...	Even if waiting in the long line is very tedious ...	...............
After buying something from the market, if I realize that the owner of the market gave me more change than she was supposed to...	..... ..... .....	I immediately go back and return the extra money that was given to me.
If I see that someone breaks my neighbour's window, and that person threatens me not to tell what happened ...	.....	However, because I do not feel right that an innocent person is wrongfully accused, I would go and tell the truth.
If my teacher allows me to retake a test that I could not take on the scheduled test day due to my illness...	I think that getting the exam questions from my friends would be an unjust thing to do...	..... ..... .....
.....	Because I know that the item is not so expensive in the market, I feel conscientiously uncomfortable...	I warn the retailer saying that he is selling the item too expensively.
.....

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

WE DO NOT PAY BRIBE!

After the conquest of Khaybar, the Messenger of Allah, (pbuh), sent Abdullah ibn Rawaha (r.a.) to Khaybar as the officer of zakat. Abdullah ibn Rawaha meticulously calculated the amount of zakat and went onto collect it. When the Jews of Khaybar saw this kind of diligence, they got distressed from the inquest of Abdullah (r.a.). In order to bribe Abdullah (r.a.), the Jews collected pieces of their women's jewellery and said to him,

- "This is our gift to you. Go easy on us in your collection. Turn a blind eye to our economic matters when calculating our produce and do not take too much from us!"

Abdullah ibn Rawaha said,

- "O tribe of Jews! By Allah! You are among the most detestable to me of Allah's creation due to this offer you have made to me, but it does not prompt me to deal unjustly with you. What you have offered to me is a bribe, and bribery is forbidden. We will not touch it."

Upon this response, the Jews showed respect to Abdullah and said,

- "This kind of justice is what supports the heavens and the earth." (Muwatta, Musaqat, 2)



What would have happened if Abdullah b. Rawaha (r.a.) had accepted the bribe as a gift?

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Are there places today where bribe is offered and taken even if it is prohibited in Islam?

.....

.....

In your opinion, how can we save ourselves from taking and paying bribes?

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.....

THE RIGHT OF THE BABY

A trade caravan camped in a place near Medina. In order to protect it, Umar (r.a.) said to Abdurrahman b. Awf (r.a.):

- "If you have time, let us go tonight and watch over this caravan against thieves."

Abdurrahman b. Awf accepted and they came to the caravan and started to keep watch around it. In the following hours of that night, Umar (r.a.) heard a baby crying. He went towards the sound and told the baby's mother:

- "Be merciful to your child." He then went back to his post. A while later, he heard the baby crying again. He went to the mother and said the same things. Towards the end of the night when he heard the baby crying again, he went to the mother and scolded the mother saying,

- "Woe to you! What kind of a mother are you? What is wrong with your baby that he does not stop crying?"

The mother who did not know Umar personally said:

- "O servant of Allah! You have beleaguered me tonight! I am trying to wean my baby and he insists on suckling."

Umar (r.a.) asked:

- "Why are you trying to wean him?"

The woman replied:

- "Because the caliph makes payment only for the babies who are weaned."

Umar was perplexed by this response and he asked the age of the infant. He then told the woman:

- "Do not rush to wean your baby."

By then, it was time for the Dawn Prayer. Umar (r.a.) led the prayer in tears. After finishing the prayer, he addressed to the congregation saying:

- "Woe to Umar! Who knows how many babies were deprived of their mother because of him?" He then enacted an edict: "Do not rush to wean your babies. There will be a payment for all Muslim children." and he sent the edict all around the Muslim land. (Ibn Sa'd, III, 301; Ibn al-Jawzi, Manaqib, p. 77)

What aspects of Umar (r.a.) are compelling in terms of paying attention to other people's rights?

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To what does a person need to pay attention to if he or she wants to observe other people's rights?

.....

.....

THE SWORD OF JUSTICE

There is a story about the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II that is astonishing: It is narrated that Sultan Mehmed II was having a mosque constructed. The architect of the mosque was a Greek person who was an adept man at his job. One day Sultan Mehmed II and the Greek architect had a disagreement regarding the marble pillars of the mosque. The Greek architect constructed the pillars not as the Sultan requested but rather as he deemed proper in accordance with the principles of architecture.

When the Sultan Mehmed II learned what the architect had done, the Sultan got angry. Assuming that the architect did that to ruin the aesthetic style of the mosque, he had the architect's hand cut. The Greek architect whose hand had been cut went to the judge Hizir Çelebi in order to carry out a lawsuit against the Sultan Mehmed II. After listening to the Greek architect's case, Judge Hizir Çelebi sent a commission of experts to evaluate the case. As a result of experts' inspection and research, it was revealed that the Greek architect built the pillars in accordance with the principles of architecture rather than with the aim to ruin the aesthetic of the mosque.

Then the Greek architect as the plaintiff and the Sultan Mehmed II as the defendant appeared before the judge Hizir Çelebi. After deliberations, the judge reached his verdict. His verdict was retaliation. To fulfil justice, the hand of the Sultan was going to be cut. The Greek architect was amazed from seeing the Sultan sitting in the defendant's chair as a person equal to him. Moreover, the Sultan had no objection to the verdict. He had accepted the verdict and waited for his punishment. Witnessing this just ruling, the Greek architect said in tears:



"You all be my witness that I withdraw my case and embrace Islam in the face of the perfect justice of your religion."

What would have happened if Sultan Mehmed II did not accept to be the defendant and refused to go to the court?

.....

.....

What would have happened if the judge decided in favour of the Sultan?

.....

.....

A SOLDIER WITH IMPECCABLE MORALS

It is narrated that Ottoman Sultan Yavuz Selim set out on the expedition to Egypt. The army camped near Gebze, which is a district between Istanbul and Izmit, and famous for its gardens and vineyards. The Sultan said to the commander of the janissaries,

- "Commander! I crave an apple. Go and buy some from the market." However, there was no apple in the market. The commander came to the presence of the Sultan and said:

- "O my sultan! I could not even find a single apple in the market."

The Sultan asked:

- "How about my soldier? Does not any one of them have an apple?"

The commander replied:

- "Unfortunately, they do not! I even checked their belongings, there was not a single apple."

The Sultan's eyes gleamed and he said:

- "Alhamdulillah! If, in the belongings of my soldiers there was even a single apple found picked from the people's gardens, I would not be able to go to conquer Egypt with an army eating what is not rightfully theirs."



What possible effects of the Sultan's care and attention to protect people's property rights may be found on his soldiers and subjects?

.....

Have you ever seen such people who are careful towards other people's property rights? Can you give examples?

.....

TEST YOURSELF

HOW JUST ARE YOU?

1. **What would you do if your mother asks your help for the house chores when you have a lot of homework?**
 - a) Everybody should do his/her own job. Is it fair to go to school and do the housework at the same time?
 - b) Of course our parents have rights upon us. I would run to help them.
 - c) I would tell her to ask for my help when I do not have homework.
 - d) I would direct my brother to help her for I am busy with my homework.
2. **You are eating a nice toast in your garden. A cat comes and starts to stare at your toast. What would you do?**
 - a) I would chase the cat away.
 - b) The poor animal must be hungry so I would cut a piece of my toast and give it to the cat.
 - c) I would wait for it to go, and if it did not, I would wait and then leave.
 - d) I would go and tell my mother to make another toast in order to give it to the cat.
3. **You arranged a meeting with your friend. However, your friend was half an hour late for your meeting. What would you do?**
 - a) I would politely tell him that he wasted my time.
 - b) I would assume that he had some emergency and I would not ask him anything.
 - c) I think that I am also late for my appointments so I do not say anything.
 - d) I cut my ties with him and never be his friend again.
4. **When your father drives, he frequently violates the traffic rules. What would you do?**
 - a) I would not interfere with his affairs. It would not be appropriate to meddle with the driver's task.
 - b) I would politely caution my father by asking "Are you not violating the rights of other vehicles and pedestrians?"
 - c) I would express my admiration for him by saying "Wow Dad! You are so astute."
 - d) I would never get in my father's car again.
5. **You shared the house chores with your brothers. Your share was to clean the garden. However, your job ended earlier than the others'. What would you do?**
 - a) I would sit and watch TV.
 - b) I would pretend like my job has not finished and wait for them to finish their chores.
 - c) I would help my brothers whose chores have not finished yet.
 - d) I would try to hurry them up by saying, "How slow you are!"
6. **When you were in the school yard, you saw someone trying to scratch his name on a trunk of a tree. What would you do?**
 - a) I would go and tell the teacher.
 - b) I would go and caution him by saying "My friend! People, animals, and plants all have a right to live. Please do not harm that tree."
 - c) I would try to stop him and fight if necessary.
 - d) I would not care thinking that "it is every man for himself, it is none of my business."

IF I WERE HIM

CHEATING AT THE TEST

You have a very important test today. You are intently studying even during the breaks. You ask questions to each other and help each other by explaining the topics that you could not understand. Finally, the time for the test comes. You are excited. At first, the questions seem easy and you quickly answer them. Then, the questions start to get harder. You do your best, try to concentrate and answer the questions. You are not sure about the answers, but hope they are correct.



You realize something towards the end of the test. Two of your friends sitting before you are constantly looking at your paper. They copy your answers and write precisely the same answers on their papers. If you tell your teacher, you are afraid of the possible consequences. If you do not tell your teacher, you feel that it would be unfair to you. While you are embroiled in all of these thoughts, the time ends and your teacher starts to collect the papers.

When your teacher is taking your paper, you start to say, "Teacher..," but then you make eye contact with your friend. You think to yourself that perhaps his test was so awful that he had no choice but to cheat from your paper. You change your mind, and the teacher does not find out what happened.

A week later, the grades are announced. You see that you got a mark of 70, while your friend who cheated got a mark of 85. What would you do?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



1. What do you see in the picture?
.....
2. Why do you think that people are waiting in line?
.....
3. Which one of them, do you think, needs water first and most? Why?
.....
4. What do you think, is it fair to have different number and sizes of containers? Why?
.....
5. If some people in the queue are given priority, who would those people be? Why?
.....
6. What would happen if people were not pleased about their turn in the line and tried to get ahead?
.....
7. If you were in the queue as well and there was no water left when your turn came, what would you do?
.....
8. What would you do, if someone who were not in line came and cut the line ahead of you?
.....
9. What would you do if an old man asks for your turn in the queue? Why?
.....

EXAMPLES FROM REAL LIFE

THREE SACKS OF SOLDIER UNIFORMS

In the 19th century, the Germans lived on the one side, and the French lived on the other side of the Ruhr River in the city of Mulheim, Germany. Every year the French passed across to the German bank of the river stealing all their crop and would then return to their side. The Germans who were feeble at the time could not stand up for their rights. However, they were worn-out from what the French did to them. They decided to write a letter to the Ottoman ruler and let him know about their problem. They wrote the following in their letter:

“Every year the French oppress us and steal our crop. You are the Sultan of the empire which gave its name to the world and caliph of the Muslim world. Save us from our oppressors. Send soldiers to protect us. Give us the opportunity to collect our crop at least for this year.”

The Ottoman Sultan whose state was in a period of decline examined the letter and did not deem it necessary to send his troops. He thought that it would be sufficient to send soldier uniforms, so he commanded his men to send a letter and three sacks full of white soldier uniforms. When the Germans received the sacks and the letter, they were astonished. They read the letter that said,

“The French are a cowardly people. We do not need to send janissaries against them. It would be sufficient for them to see the janissary uniforms. Let your men wear the uniforms in the sacks and stroll on the bank of the river in the harvest period. Seeing people wearing janissary uniforms will be adequate for the French.”

The owners of the fields and gardens immediately picked up the janissary uniforms. During the harvest time, a big group from the people of Mulheim started to walk up and down on the bank of Ruhr. The news that came next day made the Germans very pleased. The French who thought the Ottomans had come to help the Germans scurried far into the inner regions due to fright.



CHILDREN OF THE GHETTO

A professor sent his students of a sociology course to the ghettos of the city of Baltimore and told them to research the state of two hundred boys living in that region. He requested his students to make an evaluation about the future of those boys. Almost all students presented a report stating that none of those children had any chance in the future.



Twenty-five years after the above mentioned incident, another professor accidentally found the assignment. He asked his students to continue the old project and find out what happened to those two-hundred boys. Other than the 20 boys who had died or moved away from the region, the students were able to reach 176 out of the 180 boys. The students found out that they had all become successful engineers, doctor, lawyers, or businessmen.

The professor was astonished and decided to investigate the matter. Since all those boys, men now, were still living in the same district, he had the opportunity to meet all of them. Their answer to the question, "How have you become so successful under such inappropriate circumstances?" was same: Thanks to the teacher we had in the school of our neighbourhood.

The professor was very curious about that teacher. It was very difficult for him to find the traces of the old teacher. He went to the teacher's house to visit her. Despite the wrinkles of the old age, she still was an energetic old woman who looked at life with hope. The professor asked the old teacher:

- "What did you do so successfully that your students were able to leave the deprived ghetto and achieve such good occupations? What is the secret of your success?"

The old teacher's eyes gleamed and she smiled. She said:

- "Without expecting anything in return, I paid them the esteem and concern which everybody deserves. And I loved them so much."



CLASS ACTIVITY

HOW CAN JUSTICE BE ACHIEVED?

The students are divided into two groups. The following postulates are given to them in order, and every group expresses their own thoughts about these postulates:

FIRST GROUP

Parents must treat all their children justly in regards to education, food, and love. Only in this way will the feeling of justice in children develop.

The rules in a school should be clearly defined and the sanctions for every possible situation should be in a written form. Only then can justice be achieved in that school.

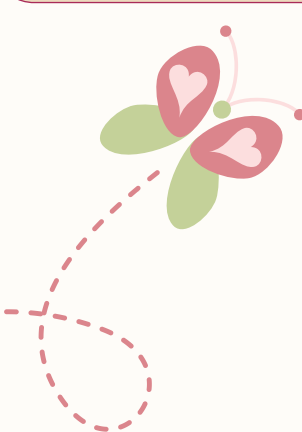
The law-makers and authorities should establish effective laws and regulations. Because justice can be achieved only by this way.

SECOND GROUP

If all the children in a family observe the rights of each other, the feeling of justice will develop in that family.

As long as students and teachers treat each other fairly, the feeling of justice would be rooted in that school. For this, there is no need for written rules.

When people are careful and sensitive, justice can be achieved in that society. Justice cannot be established in a society by means of prisons and punishments. The feeling of justice starts in the consciousness of individuals.



The activity will end by drawing attention to the role of both individuals and authorities in the achievement of justice.

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

PLEASE WOULD YOU COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW?

Write a couple of the just deeds that you did in the past. Then calculate how much spiritual rewards you earn because of those just deeds that you carried out.

MY JUST DEEDS	THE STATE AFTER ACTING JUSTLY			
	When I acted justly, I felt ease of consciousness. (10 points)	The person whom I treated justly thanked me /smiled at me. (15 points)	When I acted justly, I became a good example for others. (20 points)	I had to pay a price for acting justly. (30 points)
1 Example: I informed my teacher who graded my test higher than I what I merited. I requested the grade that I deserved.	I felt at peace. (10 points)	My teacher thanked me. (15 points)	One of my friend who saw me did the same. (20 points)	I got a lower grade. (30 points)
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				



CHAPTER 12

SEEKING ONE'S RIGHT AND STANDING UP AGAINST INJUSTICE



THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

"...Thus, if anyone commits aggression against you, attack him just as he has attacked you..." (al-Baqara, 2: 194)

"And how could you refuse to fight in the cause of Allah and of the utterly helpless men and women and children who are crying, "O our Sustainer! Lead us forth [to freedom] out of this land whose people are oppressors, and raise for us, out of Your grace, a protector, and raise for us, out of Your grace, one who will bring us succor!" (al-Nisa, 4: 75)

"and shown him the two highways [of good and evil]? But he would not try to ascend the steep uphill road. And what could make thee conceive what it is, that steep uphill road? [It is] the freeing of one's neck [from the burden of sin], or the feeding, upon a day of [one's own] hunger, of an orphan near of kin, or of a needy [stranger] lying in the dust" (al-Balad, 90: 10-16)

"and who, whenever tyranny afflicts them, defend themselves." (al-Shura, 42: 39)

"But [since] good and evil cannot be equal, repel you [evil] with something that is better and lo! he between whom and yourself was enmity [may then become] as though he had [always] been close [unto thee], a true friend!" (Fussilat, 41: 34)

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

I know if I am wronged or oppressed, I have the right to retaliate and defend myself. If it is required, I should use my right in an even-handed manner.

I should stand up against oppression and side with the oppressed. If I cannot do anything, I should at least pray to Allah for them and support them in my heart.

Our Lord commands us to fight for the needy and the poor. Helping someone in need is my duty.

It does not matter who is being oppressed and wronged, we should stand up against it, the same as if it was being done to us.

I should not respond to wrong with wrong. I should respond to those who do wrong to me with good. This is because from good arises goodness and from wrong arises wrongness.



THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET

MY PROPHET SAID

"All things of a Muslim are inviolable for his brother in faith: his blood, his wealth and his honour."
(Muslim, Birr, 32)

"If one does not help his brother in faith who was humiliated in his presence, Allah will humiliate that person on the Judgment Day like his brother was humiliated."
(Imam Ahmad, Musnad, III, p. 487)

"Whoever is killed over his wealth then he is a martyr, and whoever is killed over his religion, then he is a martyr, and whoever is killed over his blood, then he is a martyr, and whoever is killed over his family, then he is a martyr."
(al-Tirmidhi, Diyat, 22.)

"The best type of Jihad (striving in the way of Allah) is speaking a true word in the presence of a tyrannical ruler." (al-Tirmidhi)

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

Life, property, and honor are sacred. I will not harm any person's life, honor and property and I should not let anybody harm mine either.

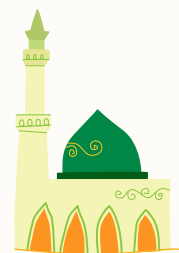
I will defend my brother in faith if he is wronged and oppressed.

I would give my life willingly for the sake of my religion, my country and nation and become a martyr.

Even if the person who oppresses and tyrannizes people is superior and stronger than me, I should tell him that what he is doing is wrong.



A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION



STANDING UP AGAINST INJUSTICE MEANS PROTECTING HUMAN HONOR

A human being possesses certain rights as soon as he or she is born. Feeding a baby, providing it a safe place, and providing the child's education after a certain age are all such basic human rights. Therefore, in order to have such rights it is sufficient enough to be born as a human being.

The most primary right of a human being is, of course, the right to live. All kinds of restrictions and harms to life are evident oppression. Obviously, we do have other rights such as believing in whatever religion we choose, possessing wealth, living with our honor, receiving education, travelling to wherever we wish, and expressing our thoughts freely. Not to stay silent in the face of any kind of violation against such rights is not only our right but also our duty. For the reason that when we do not defend them, we lose our human honor and dignity, and our world would then turn into an unsuitable place to live.

Imagine a world where everybody oppresses each other and nobody speaks up against that tyranny and continuously stays silent. Who would want to live in such a world? Just as not wanting to do injustice to any member of the creation is a precious virtue, taking necessary precautions to realize this is also a cherished virtue. This is because when we speak up against oppression, we break the oppressor's courage. When the moral and upright cannot bravely walk freely around, the platform is unfortunately left for the malevolent persons, and this is truly a calamity for all people.



Just like an evil deed done to us or an evil spoken at us is an obvious oppression, not getting what we rightfully merit is also an oppression. What is the difference? Well, violence by some family members against other members of the family, or government's collection of heavy taxes from its citizens are examples of observable and obvious oppression. Whereas, an infant not receiving the love he/she deserves from his/her parents, or a citizen not receiving the services from his/her government to which he/she pays taxes are also types of oppressions. A person not caring for his/her parents when they reach old is also a type of oppression. Not standing up against or not raising our voice when a wrong deed is done to one of our relatives, neighbors, and brothers or sisters in Islam is also an oppression. If such a wrong deed is carried out on us, it becomes our natural right to ask for help by saying: "Are not you going to help me?" or "Are not you going to protect me?"

Not getting exactly what is rightfully ours, or getting less or more than what we merit is an injustice or an oppression against us. Keeping our silence before an oppression is also a type of oppression which we do to ourselves. Our religion prohibits us both to oppress and to be silent in front of such oppression.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM “THE BEST ONE”

SAVE A DAY FOR US

During the days of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), there often were lessons in the Prophet’s Mosque. However, Muslim women were not able to benefit from these lessons as much as Muslim men. Muslim women who felt they would like to get benefit from these lessons of our Prophet (pbuh) decided to send someone among them to explain their situation to the Prophet (pbuh). A courageous and an eloquent lady was elected as their representative and she appeared before the Prophet (pbuh).

She said:

“O Messenger of Allah! Only men benefit from your speeches. Could you please keep a day apart for us so that we can gather on that day and benefit from your discourses?” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) felt very glad about seeing Muslim women pursuing a path to protect their rights so he arranged a day for them saying:

“All right, let us meet in such a place on such a day.”

The Muslim women gathered on the appointed day and appointed place. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) came to those gatherings and taught Muslim women what Allah had taught him. (al-Bukhari, l’tisam, 9)



What would be the most pleasing thing for the Prophet (pbuh) in this incident?

.....

What would have happened if Muslim women had not sought after their rights?

.....



THEY RESERVED THE BLESSINGS OF PARADISE!

Muslims who migrated from Mecca to Medina had left their houses, their property, in short everything they had back in Mecca. Even though their Medinan Muslim brothers and sisters helped them a great deal, their financial situation still was not very good. Whereas, the Muslims of Medina (Ansar) due to their financial stability were able to gain more spiritual rewards by spending more in charity than the Muslims from Mecca (Muhajir). The Meccan Muhajirs who thought this was not fair decided to come and express their feelings to the Prophet (pbuh).

They said: "O Messenger of Allah! The wealthier Muslims have been able to reserve the higher levels of Paradise and eternal blessings."

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked: "What did they do in order to that?"

The poor Muhajirs replied: "They perform the ritual prayers as we perform them. They fast as we fast. However, they give more charity than we do. We cannot give as much charity. They free slaves, but we cannot."

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told them: "Shall I not teach you something by which you will be able to catch up with those who have preceded you, and get ahead of those who come after you, and only those who do as you do may be more excellent than you?"

They said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah."

He (the Holy Prophet) said: "Extol Allah, declare His Greatness, and Praise Him thirty-three times after every obligatory prayer."

The poor Muhajirs were very happy to get an opportunity to catch up with the Medinan Ansar in terms of spiritual rewards, and they left.

However, very soon afterwards the poor Muhajirs returned to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saying: "Our brethren, the possessors, of property have heard what we have been doing and now they do the same."

So the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "This is Allah's Grace and He gives it to whom He wishes." (Muslim, Masajid, 142)

What was the reason for the competition between the Ansar and the Muhajirs to gain spiritual blessings?

.....

Do you think everybody has equal opportunities to gain the blessings of Paradise? Why?

.....

.....

Who do you think, deserve the rewards of Paradise most today? Why?

.....

.....

RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO



How would a true believer act in the following situations?

SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
If my teacher whom I know to be a little bit stern makes a mistake when grading my test paper ...	I not only think that I deserve a higher grade in the exam but I also shy away from his response,	However, I gather my courage and explain my situation to my teacher in an appropriate manner.
If my mother assumes that I broke the lamp which was in fact broken by my brother,	Even if my brother will be upset and angry at me when I tell my mother what really happened,	I still tell the truth to my mother.
If someone cuts the queue when I was waiting my turn,	I think that it is not fair not only for me but also for my other friends waiting in line..	..... ..... .....
If my neighbor starts listening to music and makes noise when I am studying for tomorrow's exam ...	I get angry for not being able to concentrate on my exam.	..... ..... .....
After shopping from the market and counting the change given back to me, if I realize that the cashier paid me short...	..... ..... .....	I explain the situation to the cashier and get the difference from what he paid me short.
..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....	I go back to the store to get a replacement for the commodity I bought.
If I witness that my friends cheat in the exam...	I think that this is not fair for the other pupils...	..... ..... .....



FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

THE WOMAN WHO DEFENDS HER RIGHT

During the caliphate of Umar (r.a.), Muslims' financial situation got better. There were some men who then considerably raised the amount of dowry that they paid to their wives. Umar (r.a.) thought this was wrong for it might make marriages more difficult for other men. One day, he ascended to the pulpit and asked not to raise the dowry amount paid to women saying:

"I do not know of a time when the dowry amount has ever been more than 400 dirhams."

After the sermon, a woman of the Quraysh came and objected to Umar (r.a.) saying:

"O commander of the believers! Have you banned paying women dowry more than 400 dirhams?"

Umar (r.a.) affirmatively replied.

Upon this the woman said: "Don't you know Allah Almighty say in the Qur'an "But if you desire to give up a wife and to take another in her stead, do not take away anything of what you have given the first one, however much it may have been. Would you, perchance, take it away by slandering her and thus committing a manifest sin?" (al-Nisa, 4: 20)

Umar (r.a.) was pleased by the woman's response with a verse. He realized that he had made a mistake by limiting the amount of dowry and said:

"O Allah! Please forgive me! Everybody is more knowledgeable than Umar."

He then went up to the pulpit again: "O people! I had limited the amount of dowry to 400 dirhams. However, from now on, you may pay your dowry as much as you want." (Ibn Hajar, Matalib, II, 4-5)

Is it difficult to speak up for the truth before a government officer or a scholar? Why?

To what should a person pay attention to when seeking his rights?

The fact that Umar (r.a.) corrected his mistake soon after he was told about it shows which feature of his character?

THE LIVES OF FORTY PEOPLE

Ottoman Sultan Yavuz Selim Han was a severe and harsh man against injustice and negligence. He, especially, was meticulous about state property. He would take into account even if a single cent went missing from the state treasury. This is because the state had been entrusted to him and he was going to be held accountable before Allah Almighty.

One day something was stolen from the state treasury. There were forty people working there and it was not known which one of them had committed the crime. Sultan Yavuz Selim Han became very irate due to this incident since someone had committed theft in the state treasury, but the culprit was unidentified. The Sultan immediately commanded the execution of the forty people working at the treasury. The culprit was probably one or two people, but the incident was leading to the loss of the lives of forty people.

The death penalty order had not been executed yet. Sheikh al-Islam Zenbilli Ali Efendi was informed of the situation. This was not justice, but rather injustice. Such a mistake would ruin not only the Sultan's worldly life, but also his afterlife. In order to prevent this injustice, he hurriedly entered the Sultan's presence without asking permission. He wanted to hear the situation from the Sultan himself. Sultan Selim gave him the following severe response:

- "What you heard is true, but you have no right to interfere in state business."

Upon this, Sheik al-Islam gave the Sultan a response as severe as the Sultan's words:

"My Sultan! I am accountable to tell you about the rules of Islam. The reason why I came here is to save your afterlife."

By these words, the Sultan calmed down and asked: "Does not Islam, in order to prevent theft, allow me to punish people who commit a crime?"

Zenbilli Ali Efendi replied: "Killing these men do not eliminate all thieves. So punish everybody in accordance with their crimes."

The Sultan who subdued many great armies lowered his head and withdrew his execution order. He changed the punishment and instead put those people into jail. Zenbilli Ali Efendi who was very pleased for the Sultan's decision talked to him one more time before leaving:

- "My Sultan! This was the order of Islam. I have one more request which is something personal" and continued his words saying:

- "My Sultan! The offense of these sinners are their own. Who will take care of their families when they are in prison? My humble request from you is to assign a salary for their families until they are released.

Sultan Yavuz Selim Han also fulfilled this request. His only wish was that in the presence of Allah on the Day of Judgment Day he would be free from having ever taken any rights of the servants of Allah.



TEST YOURSELF

HOW MUCH ATTENTION DO YOU PAY TO PROTECTING YOUR RIGHTS AND STANDING UP AGAINST INJUSTICE?

1. **When you were playing, someone punctured your ball. What would you do to the person who did that?**
 - a) I would go and buy a new ball.
 - b) I would go and tell that person to buy me a new ball.
 - c) I would go to that person and penalize him by punching him.
 - d) I would tell him that I would be satisfied if he buys me a new ball if he has the cash.
2. **When you and your friends were arguing about something, he got angry and tore your book. What would you do?**
 - a) I would tear his book.
 - b) I would tell our teacher what happened and ask for his help.
 - c) I would do nothing in order to protect our friendship.
 - d) I would cry and ask my friend to pay for my book.
3. **The new student in your class tries to become a friend with your best friend. What would you do?**
 - a) I would do nothing and continue my friendship.
 - b) I would tell my best friend the bad sides of the new student so he would not become a friend with him.
 - c) I would let them be friends. I can find myself another friend.
 - d) I would humiliate the new student in front of everybody.
4. **When you were playing in the street, someone tripped you and caused you to fall. Then the child who caused you to fall started to make fun of you. What would you do?**
 - a) I would go and punch him.
 - b) I would leave saying "I do not deal with worthless people."
 - c) I would tell my father what happened and then he would go and speak to the child's father.
 - d) I would do nothing because he might beat me up.
5. **Your neighbor attacked you and slapped you saying "How could you beat my son up?" Whereas you had no idea what he was talking about. What would you do?**
 - a) I would defend myself saying that I do not know anything.
 - b) I would cry and run away.
 - c) I would tell my father what happened and ask for his help.
 - d) I would go to the police station and sue him.
6. **Your father cut your allowance because you got low grades in your exams. You are having financial problems to take care of your needs. What would you do?**
 - a) I would ask money from my mother.
 - b) I would promise my father to study harder and get better grades. Then I would ask him to increase my allowance.
 - c) I would look for a night job to earn money.
 - d) I would borrow money from my friends telling them that I will pay them back later.

IF I WERE HIM

YOU HAVE FALLEN INTO THE HANDS OF LANDLORD

Your father has borrowed some money from a landlord in your village because your family's financial state is not very good. The final date of paying back the loan was due very soon, but you knew that your father did not have any money saved up. He only earned enough money to provide for his family.

Your father was feeling both sad and tense. You recognized that he could not sleep at night. You also knew that the landowner in the village was a ruthless man. You heard stories about his ruthlessness in the village.

Finally, the due date of the loan arrives. The landowner sent one of his men to collect the money. Your father told him that he did not have any money and sent the man back. However, the landowner sent his man again and delivered the following message to your father: "You either pay your loan or send your son to work in my farm."



Upon hearing this message, all your family were startled. You are a fourteen-year-old young man who is very successful at school. What will you do?

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INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



1. What do you see in the picture?
.....
2. What do you think the person who polishes the shoes thinks at that moment?
.....
3. What would the other people think about this boy who earns his livelihood by working? Why?
.....
4. Let us say normally polishing a pair of shoes is 3 Liras, how much, do you think, is this boy's labor worth?
.....
5. Do you think there should be a difference between the worth of this boy's labor and an adult man's labor?
.....
6. If the man who hires this boy to polish his shoes tells the boy "Take these two liras. You're a just a child and it is enough for you, would it be fair? Why?
.....
7. If you were that boy, what would you say to the man who pays less than what he was supposed to?
.....
8. If the boy cannot get the money that he deserves, what should he do?
.....
9. What do you think, is it possible for everybody to get their rights in this world?
.....
10. What do you think, what will be waiting in the Hereafter for those who cannot get their rights in this world and for those who steal other people's rights?
.....

STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

THE STICK OF ALLAH

Mawlana Jaluddin al-Rumi narrates the story of a thief as follows: Once a thief broke into a garden. He climbed up the best fruit tree in the garden. When he could not reach the fruits, he started to shake the branches of the tree. The more he shook the branches, the more fruits fell down. The owner of the garden heard the noise coming from the branches and the falling fruits, and he ran to his garden. He shouted at the thief:

- "You rascal! What are you doing there? Who are you? You caused my fruits to fall down on the ground. Are not you afraid of Allah? Come down immediately!"

The thief did not care at all. While he was eating from the fruits, he continued to shake the branches. He then said:

- "O man! Why are you yelling? One of the servants of Allah is eating from a garden of Allah. What is wrong about that?"

The owner of the garden replied: "Come down and let us talk."

As soon as the thief came down, the owner of the garden caught him and tied his hands.

He then called his servant saying: "Take this stick and beat him." When the servant started to beat the thief with the stick, the thief started to beg for mercy saying:

- "Sir, please forgive me. Fear Allah!"

The owner of garden said: - "O man! Why are you yelling? Just like you said, this stick is the stick of Allah; and the one who beats you with it is a servant of Allah. He is fulfilling one of the commands of Allah. What is wrong about that?"



CLASS ACTIVITY

ROLE PLAYING

The following piece is played by four people.

THE AGELESS SUITCASE

MOTHER: That is enough! I am tired of it! I do not want your old father in this house. I did not get married to you to look after this old imbecile man. You told me that he would die in a couple of years. Look, he is still alive and he does not seem to be dying anytime soon.

FATHER: Look honey! He is my father! Do you want me to throw him out into the streets?

MOTHER: Of course, I do not want you to throw him out into the street, but he can live in the mountain cabin by himself. We do not use that hut anyway.

FATHER: (He is thoughtful) What will an old man do there alone? What would he eat and drink? He cannot even stand up from his chair.

MOTHER: Of course, he can. When you are not at home, he stands up from his chair. He just acts timid in front of you. And he is entirely resentment towards me. I am going to pack all his belongings into a suitcase and you will take him to the mountain cabin tonight. I cannot stand this old imbecile even for an hour more.

FATHER: Okay! It seems I do not have any other choice!

(The suitcase and a couple more things are loaded into the trunk while the ten-year-old boy is bewilderedly watching what is happening)

BOY: Daddy! Can I come with you when you take my grandpa?

GRANDPA: Please son! Let him come so I can spend time with him one last time.

FATHER: Okay!

(An hour later the things in the truck of the car are unloaded at the mountain cabin. The man carries the things and helps his father to settle into the cabin.)

GRANDPA: O my beloved grandson! Come here! I want to hug you one last time.

BOY: (Says) Grandpa! (and hugs his grandfather)

FATHER: I will visit you every other week and take care of your needs.

GRANDPA: (while sitting in the chair) This is my destiny. Whatever goes around comes around.

FATHER: (Showing his displeasure in his face) Let's go son!

(Just when they are about get on their car)

BOY: Daddy Stop! I forgot something

(He gets off the car, runs into the cabin and comes back with an empty suitcase)

FATHER: My son! What are you going to do with this suitcase? It is already an old one.

BOY: No father! I will need this suitcase when I take you to this cabin when you reach old age.

After this little play, the students in the class will discuss what kind of injustice every individual in the story experiences.

1. What kind of injustice is done to the grandfather and who does it? What could the person have requested to prevent this?
2. What kind of injustice is done to the mother and who carries it out? What could she have requested to prevent this?
3. What kind of injustice is done to the father and who does it? What and from whom could he have requested to prevent this?
4. Is there any injustice done to the boy? What and from whom could he have requested assistance in order to prevent this injustice?

These questions are discussed in the class and students develop different perspectives.



YOU DO THE BEST

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW?

IF I ALWAYS SEEK MY RIGHTS AND STAND UP AGAINST INJUSTICE, WHAT DO I GAIN?	WHAT DO I LOSE IF I DO NOT SEEK MY RIGHTS AND STAND UP AGAINST INJUSTICE?
1 Example: I develop an honorable personality.	 I lose my honor
2 Example: People respect me, which makes me happy	 I become someone whom nobody respects and pays attention towards.
3 People around me trust me	
4 I will be given responsibilities by which I can be beneficial to the society.	
5 	
6 	
7 	

CHAPTER 13



BEING TOLERANT,
KIND AND
POLITE

THE MUSLIM LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"But [since] good and evil cannot be equal, repel you [evil] with something that is better and lo! He between whom and yourself was enmity [may then become] as though he had [always] been close [unto you], a true friend!"

(Fussilat, 42: 34)

I will prevent the evil done to me in the best, kindest and politest way I can. Then, I may become friends with the person who wronged me.

"And tell My servants that they should speak in the kindest manner [unto those who do not share their beliefs]: verily, Satan is always ready to stir up discord between men - for, verily, Satan is man's open foe!" (al-Isra, 17: 53)

If I am nice and kind in my speech and if I am not selfish, I will have good relations with other people.

"...Abraham was most tender-hearted. most clement."

(al-Tawba, 9: 114)

Allah Almighty speaks about the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tolerance, tender-heartedness and clemency in a praising way. If I take after Prophet Abraham (pbuh), Allah Almighty will love me too.

"And it was by Allah's grace that you [O Prophet] did deal gently with your followers: for if you had been harsh and hard of heart, they would indeed have broken away from you..."

(Al Imran, 3: 159)

Showing clemency and being tolerant, kind and polite was also a feature of our Prophet's (pbuh) character. I will show my love for our Prophet (pbuh) by trying to be like him.

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY PROPHET SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

“Facilitate things to people (concerning religious matters), and do not make it hard for them and give them good tidings and do not make them run away (from Islam).” (al-Bukhari, ‘Ilm, 11)

Just as our Prophet (pbuh) advised, instead of using heart-breaking, impolite and criticizing words, I should talk to people with hopeful and pleasing words.

A Bedouin stood up and started urinating in one corner of the mosque. The people caught him but the Prophet (pbuh) ordered them to leave him and to pour a bucket of water over the place where he had passed the urine. The Prophet (pbuh) then said, “You have been sent to make things easy and not to make them difficult.” (al-Bukhari, Wudu, 58)

I should be more tolerant, forgiving and thoughtful towards people who do wrong things by mistake or due to their ignorance.

“Kindness is not to be found in anything but that it adds to its beauty and it is not withdrawn from anything but it makes it defective.” (Muslim, Birr, 78-79)

Nobody wants to hear harsh and heart-breaking words. I can also beautify my surroundings wherever I am by conducting myself with kindness, politeness and tolerance.

“Whoever was given his share of gentleness, then he has been given a share of good. And whoever has been prevented from his share of gentleness, then he has been prevented from his share of good. Nothing is heavier on the believer’s Scale on the Day of Judgment than good character. For indeed Allah, Most High, is angered by the shameless obscene person.” (al-Tirmidhi, Sunan, Birr, 66)

If I want to become a believer praised by Allah and our Prophet (pbuh), and loved and respected by people, I should pay attention to my speech in order to be nice, kind, and tolerant.

A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

BEING TOLERANT AND POLITE GIVES A PERSON PEACE AND TRANQUILITY

How nice are people who thank others when something nice is done to them, or ask politely when they need anything, or apologize when they make mistakes towards others even if they are children! How nice are people who greet others when they meet, who do not remind people constantly of their errors their faces and humiliate them, and who always behave well with others in a friendly manner! Such people are the peaceful and tranquil ones, and they give peace and tranquility to those around them.

If we closely examine the actions and behaviors of nice and tolerant people, we can see that there are some minor differences amongst them that are not hard to adopt. How hard can it be to say to someone who does a nice thing for us "Thank you, May Allah be pleased with you"? It is not difficult, either to say "You are welcome" or "Please." It is easy to greet the people we encounter by saying by saying, "Marhaban" or "As-salamu alay-kum." It is not demanding to display our affection and concern towards people by asking about their health and wellbeing through phrases such as "How are you?", "How is your life?", "How is your school life?", and "How are your parents?" What is important is to want to be a concerned person.

Polite people are friendly and eloquently spoken. They know that smiling and speaking politely are a kind of charity in Islamic understanding. Tolerant people know that when they hide people's minor errors, Allah will conceal their mistakes in the Hereafter. They also know that when they take care of someone's need, Allah will take care of their needs on the Judgement Day. This is the reason that such people can easily motivate themselves to do good and be good.

Everyone wants to be close to, and be a friend to those who do not hurt, humiliate, and treat others callously, and impolitely and known to be kind, tolerant and lenient. They bequeath peace and tranquility to those who are near them. In fact, we all feel happy and peaceful when we are close to such people.



THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM “THE BEST ONE”

DO NOT SMELL OF SWEAT!

The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) were people who did not shirk away from taking care of their own needs. They worked in their gardens and earned their livelihood through their own work. Their efforts and hard-work were pleasing to the Prophet (pbuh). However, there was an issue which with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was not very pleased. On Fridays, his Companions used to work in the fields, and they used to sweat while working and due to that they smelled of sweat when they came to the mosque for the Friday Prayer. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was uncomfortable due to this problem and wanted his Companions to know about it. Therefore, one day he kindly requested from his Companions:

- “You need to make sure to wash yourselves on this day.”

The Companions understood what the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) meant through this request and from that day they made sure to take a bath and clean themselves before coming to the Friday Prayer. (al-Bukhari, Jum’a, 16; Buyu, 15; Muslim, Jum’a, 6)

Why do you think Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) wanted his Companions to wash and clean themselves when coming to the mosque?

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What would have happened if the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had told them to wash and clean themselves in a rude and harsh manner?

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THE CHOICE OF ZAYD

It is narrated that Zayd b. Haritha (r.a.) was abducted and taken to the market of Ukaz to be sold as a slave. At that time, Hakim b. Hizam bought Zayd for four hundred dirhams for his aunt Khadijah. When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saw Zayd next to his wife, he said:

- “If this slave were mine, I would free him.” Khadijah (r. anha) happily replied:

- “Then, he is yours” and the Prophet (pbuh) immediately emancipated Zayd. (Ibn His-
ham, I, 266; Ibn Sa’d, III, 40)

Zayd's father was very sad about losing his son and went looking for him. When he heard that his son was in Mecca, together with his brother, he immediately set out to Mecca and found the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). They told the Prophet that they were ready to buy back Zayd, but asked him to be merciful when deciding their son's price. Our Prophet (pbuh) said:

- "Can't there be any other way to solve this problem?"

They asked: - "way could that?"

Our Prophet (pbuh) said: - "Call Zayd and let him choose. If he chooses you, you do not need to pay anything. If he chooses to stay here, by Allah I will not exchange someone who wants to stay with me with anything you can offer."

Upon this offer Zayd's father and uncle said: "You are so merciful towards us to make us such a great offer." Thinking that their son would choose his own family, they told Zayd that he was free to choose.

Zayd said: - "By Allah! I would not exchange the Messenger of Allah with anybody. I want to stay with him."

When Zayd's father and uncle rebuked Zayd, he told them: "I saw such kindness from this man that I would not choose anybody over him. I will never leave him."

Seeing his loyalty, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) took Zayd to the Ka'bah and adopted Zayd saying to those who were in the Ka'bah: - "O People! Be my witness that Zayd is my son."

Upon hearing this, Zayd's father and his uncle happily returned to their home. (Ibn His- ham, I, 267; Ibn Sa'd, III, 42)



What might have been different in Zayd's life if he had gone back with his father and uncle?

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What kind of goodness and splendor might Zayd have seen in the Prophet (pbuh)?

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RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION

FEELING

BEHAVIOR

If my friend rudely yell at me saying "Shut the window! We are feeling cold!"

I feel surprised and sad for my friend's rude behavior for such a simple request,

However, I would tell him "My friend, you did not need to yell, of course I can close the window" and then I would close the window.

If I receive a gift at an unexpected time,

I would feel surprised and happy,

I would thank the one who gave the gift.

When adults begin to talk about serious matters in the room,

I would think that those issues do not concern me and I would want them to speak more comfortably,

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If the little child of our guest tears my book,

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However, I would not say anything bad to the child. I would think that I should not have left my book in such a place where a young child may reach it.

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I would feel angry and sad.

However, I would not yell and I would try to keep my patience. I would just express my sadness.

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I would certainly ask his permission to use it.

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Next time when I meet him, I would still speak with him in a friendly manner and ask him about his health and wellbeing.

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

THE INFLUENCE THAT THE LENIENT AND THE POLITE COMPANION LEFT

Mus'ab b. Umayr whose face looked like the Prophet's face very much had embraced Islam when he was a young man. After he converted to Islam, he did not return back to his old faith even though his family tortured him and disinherited him.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) sent him to Medina to teach the message of Islam. Thanks to his efforts, the first person who embraced Islam was As'ad b. Zurar (r.a.) who hosted Mus'ab in his house for a very long time.

One day, As'ad took Mus'ab with him and sat by a well in a garden belonging to the Sons of Zafar. When Sa'd b. Mu'adh, a prominent member of the Sons of Abdulashhal, told Usayd b. Hudayr:

- "You are an accomplished man who does not need anybody's help. Go and warn this man who came here to convert those of us who are weak in their faith. Tell them never to come our neighborhood again. I would do this myself if As'ad were not my kith and kin."

Usayd picked up his spear, came to Mus'ab and As'ad, and told them angrily:

- "Why did you come here? Did you bring this foreign man to spoil the faith of the weak? Never again do that! If you would like to continue to live, leave this place immediately."

Mus'ab who was a prudent Companion of the Prophet (pbuh) spoke to him in a kind and nice manner:



- "Would you like to sit for a moment and listen to what I will tell you? You are an astute man. If you think what I will tell you is right, you can accept it. If you do not like it, you can refuse it."

Usayd replied: - "You are right."

He then put his spear down and sat down with them. Mus'ab (r.a.) recited verses from the Qur'an. When Usayd listened to the Qur'an, his face changed and his heart warmed to Islam.

He said about the Qur'an: - "What nice and holy words these are! What do you need to do when you want to convert to this religion?"

Following the instructions of Mus'ab and As'ad (r. anhum), Usayd stood up, performed his major ablution, cleaned his clothes, and uttered the testimony of faith in Islam. He then performed a two-cycle prayer. After finishing the prayer, he said:

- "When I was coming to you, I left behind such a man that if he follows your faith, nobody from his tribe would oppose him. His name is Sa'd bi Mu'adh. I will go now and send him to you." Then Usayd (r.a.) left.

A while later Sa'd came. He was very angry, but he too embraced Islam due to Mus'ab's nice and kind words. Then Sa'd went to his tribe and asked:

- "O Sons of Abdulashhal! What do you think about me?"

They said: - "You are our master, most superior one among us in thinking and our leader."

Upon this, Sa'd (r.a.) told them: - "Until you believe in Allah and His Messenger, I will not speak to you."

By the night of that day, nobody left that place from his tribe who did not embrace Islam. (Ibn Hishham, II, 43-46)

What do you think was the secret behind Mus'ab (r.a.) success in delivering the message of Islam?

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What points should you pay most attention to when you try to convince someone who does not share your thoughts and beliefs?

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When Sa'd (r.a.) invited his tribesmen to Islam after his conversion, what were the reasons for the people from his tribe to have embraced Islam?

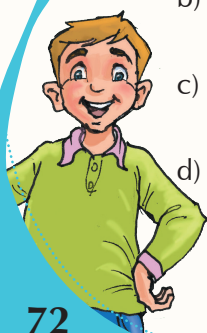
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TEST YOURSELF

HOW TOLERANT AND POLITE ARE YOU?

1. **You have some snacks packed away to eat. Just then, one of your friends comes to you. What would you do?**
 - a) I would offer him some of my snacks saying "Would you like some?"
 - b) I would give him some it, if he wants it.
 - c) I would not give him anything because not enough of it would be left for me.
 - d) I would hide it and pretend that I am not eating anything.
2. **If people around you start speaking with foul language, what would you do?**
 - a) I would do nothing. It is not important as long as I do not use the same language.
 - b) I warn them by saying, "Stop speaking like that. Shame on you"
 - c) I would get angry and turn away from them. If they continue, I would walk away from them.
 - d) I would tell my elders. They will know what to do.
3. **If everybody speaks all at the same time and your voice cannot be heard. What would you do?**
 - a) I will keep my silence. Whenever my friends stop talking then I will speak.
 - b) I would just shout louder and stop them from speaking.
 - c) I would immediately go to my teacher and tell him what is happening.
 - d) As soon as I get an opportunity, I would kindly request my friends to be quiet.
4. **Last night you had an argument with your older brother/sister. You saw that he/she was still a little bit angry in the morning. What would you do?**
 - a) I would say good morning and be the first one to greet him/her in the morning.
 - b) I would continue not to speak to him/her.
 - c) I would yell at him/her saying, "Why are you still angry?"
 - d) I would tell my father.
5. **What would you do if you see that your little brother is walking around while you are helping your mother because she is expecting some guests in the afternoon?**
 - a) I would yell at him saying, "Why are walking around lazily instead of helping us?"
 - b) I would kindly ask his help saying, "Could you help us? We need help to be ready in time."
 - c) I would as well not help my mother.
 - d) I would continue to help but still be angry at my brother for not helping.
6. **If one of your friends runs into you and causes you to fall down, and then yells at you saying, "Why are you standing in the middle of the road? Step aside", what would you do?**
 - a) I would yell back at him, "Watch where you are going!"
 - b) I would look at him angrily, but do nothing else.
 - c) I would say to him, "Should you not at least apologize?"
 - d) I would cry and not say anything.



EMPATHY

THE ANGRY VOICE

Imagine you get on a bus after a tiring day to go back home. Even though it is rush hour, you are fortunate because you were able to find an empty chair to sit on. This is because you got on the bus at one of the first bus stops of the bus line. However, you cannot stop thinking to yourself. "What would have happened if I had not found that empty spot?" After all, your feet and your head ache and you have a heavy bag to carry. What a relief! You look through the window and dream for the moment you will arrive at home. You know you will feel relieved when you arrive and enter your home.

The bus stops at every bus stop and tired people, maybe as tired as you are, from all ages get onto the bus. You do not even turn your head towards them. This is because you are young and you think that you may be obliged to offer your seat to old people entering the bus. You conscientiously feel uncomfortable, but you are tired and you do not want to listen to the voice of your conscience. Just then you see a pregnant lady. It is obvious that she is barely able to stand in the crowd.

You think that perhaps you should pretend you are sleeping. However, your conscience does not approve of that. Then you feel angry at the woman. You think "why has she left her home during the rush hour of the day." You tell yourself that "There is probably others who should give their seat to her." Everybody in the bus look at you and expect you to offer her your place. You think "No, it is probably just my imagination. People are not looking at me." However, a voice inside you still says "Maybe you should give your seat up and patiently endure your tiredness."

While you are deep in thoughts, an old man angrily yells at you:

"Do not you see the situation of this woman? Are not you going to offer your seat to her?"

You feel stunned. You did not expect such a reaction. How will you be able to respond politely to these kinds of words after such a tiring day? What are you going to do?

INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



1. What do you see in the picture?
.....
2. What do you think the boy eating the sweet corn on the cob is thinking at the moment?
.....
3. What would happen if the boy scared the geese which are trying to eat from his sweet corn on the cob?
.....
4. How are these geese eating from the boy's corn on the cob without any fear? Why?
.....
5. Would your friends feel reluctant asking from you something that you are eating or using? Why?
.....
6. If your friend craves for the thing you eat, and takes some without getting your permission, how would you react? Why?
.....
7. If the boy in the picture above had chased the geese away for sullyng his corn on the cob, what do you think the geese would have done?
.....
8. What do you feel towards your friends who forgive your little mistakes?
.....
9. How would tolerance, understanding, patience and forgiveness affect our friendships?
.....
10. What five good characteristics related to tolerance and understanding would you like to see in your friends and they would like to see in you?
.....



STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

COOKIE THIEF

One night a young man was waiting for his flight for one hour at the airport. There was still quite some time left for his flight. He bought a book and a bag of cookies from the store. Then he sat in a chair to wait. On the one hand, he was reading the book he had bought, and, on the other hand, he was eating his cookies from the bag. Just then he realized that the old man sitting in the next chair was taking cookies, one by one, from his bag.

The young man tried to ignore the older man. Then the young man started to take more cookies from the cookie bag while keeping one of his eyes at his watch. It seemed that the old man was going to finish his cookies. The more the old man took from the cookies, the angrier the young man became. The young man thought, "I am tempted to take this cookie bag and throw it into his face." As soon as the young man took a cookie, the old man was taking one too as if he was doing it to make the young man angrier. Finally, when there was only one cookie left in the bag, without making the old man notice, the young man waited thinking, "Let us see if he will indelicately take the last one as well." The old man picked up the last cookie and broke it into two pieces. He put half of it into his mouth while extending the other half to the young man. The young man angrily snatched the half cookie thinking, "O my God! He is both shameless and bald. He does not even think to thank me." Just then he heard the call for his flight. He felt a relief for being rescued from this man. He collected his bags and walked towards the gate. He did not even turn and looked at the shameless cookie thief.



By the time he sat down in his seat in the plane, his anger had cooled down. After he had settled down, he opened his travel bag to reach for the book he had bought from the store. Just then he saw his bag of cookies and he could not believe his eyes. The bag of cookies that he had bought from the store was in his travel bag.

He helplessly said "Oh no! Mine is here. I ate the old man's cookies." The old man had happily and tolerantly shared his cookies with the younger man. While the young man was accusing the old man with shamelessness and thievery, he had been the real thief. It was now too late to apologize. Whereas, if the young man had politely and kindly spoken to the old man, he would not have been in the position of feeling such a shameless thief. The young man thought "God only knows how many times I have been in this kind of situation because of my biases and inconsiderateness." Meanwhile the plane lifted off and everything was irreparably left behind.

CLASS ACTIVITY

TAKE ONESELF INTO ACCOUNT

The following table is distributed to the class. Every student fills it without writing his/her name on it. Then the papers are collected and a randomly selected paper is read to the class. Then the class discusses the applicability of the new perception.



I CONFESS THAT ONCE I	BEHAVIOR	WHEREAS
Because he tore my book, I got	angry at my friend and yelled,	If I had been more tolerant, I would not have hurt his feelings.
Because he hurt me, I hit	my brother and he hit me back, which continued for a while.	If I had warned him kindly with my words or my gaze, the issue would not have been so prolonged.
Because..........I yelled	at my parents and	If I them it would have been more appropriate.
Because I	our neighbor .....	...............
Because he spat in the street, I	somebody .....	...............
.....

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

With the help of your teacher / one of your elders, research on the internet about the general characteristics of the nations living around the world. For example, Germans, Spanish, British, Greek, Arab, Chinese, Japanese, Russian or three other countries that you may select and write down about.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW?

WHICH ONE OF THEM ARE TOLERANT, KIND, AND POLITE PEOPLE?	WHICH ONE OF THEM ARE INTOLERANT AND IMPOLITE?
<div></div>	<div></div>
WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DOES THIS TOLERANT, KIND AND POLITE NATION HAVE?	WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DOES THIS INTOLERANT AND IMPOLITE NATION HAVE
It is a developed and powerful country	Its people are generally unhappy and gloomy
It has strong neighborhood ties	<div></div>
<div></div>	<div></div>
<div></div>	<div></div>
<div></div>	<div></div>
<div></div>	<div></div>
<div></div>	<div></div>

CHAPTER 14



SHOWING RESPECT AND ATTENDING TO PARENTS

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

““And [Allah says:] ‘We have enjoined upon man goodness towards his parents: his mother bore him by bearing strain upon strain, and his utter dependence on her lasted two years: [hence, O man,] be grateful towards Me and towards your parents, [and remember that] with Me is all journeys’ end.” (Luqman, 31; 14)

My parents brought me into this world by enduring many hardships. They fed me and brought me up. They still continue to spend their efforts on me. I should not do anything to be disrespectful to them.

“Now [among the best of righteous deeds which] We have enjoined upon man [is] goodness towards his parents; yet [even so,] should they endeavor to make you ascribe divinity, side by side with Me, to something which your mind cannot accept [as divine], obey then, not: [for] it is unto Me that you all must return, whereupon I shall make you [truly] understand [the right and wrong of] all that you were doing [in life].” (al-Ankabut, 29: 8)

My father and mother are the two people who have done the best things for me in this world. It is my duty to obey everything they command me except ascribing partners to Allah. If I do this, Allah Almighty will also be pleased and content with me.

“They will ask you as to what they should spend on others. Say: “Whatever of your wealth you spend shall [first] be for your parents, and for the near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer; and whatever good you do, verily, Allah has full knowledge thereof.”” (al-Baqara, 2: 215)

After I start earning money, I will first spend it on my parents. I will always provide for their needs. Then I will help my needy relatives and then help the poor and the needy in my neighborhood.

“For your Sustainer has ordained that you shall worship none but Him. And do good unto [your] parents. Should one of them, or both, attain to old age in thy care, never say “Ugh” to them or scold them, but [always] speak unto them with reverent speech, and spread over them humbly the wings of your tenderness, and say: “O my Sustainer! Bestow Your grace upon them, even as they cherished and reared me when I was a child!”” (al-Isra, 17: 23-24)

O Allah! I seek refuge in You for my unintentional and intentional mistakes against my parents! Please let me be a good child for my parents and a good servant to You.

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET

MY PROPHET SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"Allah Almighty's pleasure is in the parent's pleasure, and Allah Almighty's anger is in the parent's anger."
(al-Tirmidhi, Birr, 3/1899)

Allah Almighty links His contentedness from us to the contentedness of our parents. In order to make Allah Almighty pleased, I need to make my parents pleased and if I make my parents unhappy that will make Allah Almighty unhappy with me.

"The biggest of the great sins are (1) to join others as partners in worship with Allah, (2) to murder a human being, (3) to disobey one's parents (4) and to make a false statement," or "to give a false witness." (al-Bukhari, Diyat, 2)

Disobedience to parents and not following their wishes, which are in line with Allah Almighty's commands, are among the major sins just as disbelief in Allah and giving false statements. I seek refuge with Allah from committing such major sins.

"Three supplications are responded to: The supplication of the oppressed, the supplication of the traveler, and the supplication of the father for his child."
(al-Tirmidhi, Da'awat, 47)

I will try to make my father happy and try to get his good prayers for me by kissing his hands every morning and serving him.

"Paradise is under the feet of mothers."
(al-Nasai', Jihad, 12)

Since Allah Almighty has placed the Paradise under my mother's feet, then I need to make my mother happy in order to enter Paradise. O Allah! Please help me to find ways and opportunities to make her happy!



A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

HOW CAN WE SHOW RESPECT TO OUR PARENTS?

How can a person carry a load whose weight gradually increases and becomes like 5, 10, or 15 kg on his lap or in her belly? How can a person endure the pain of frequently waking up almost every other hour throughout the night? Giving up to eat something that she craves – just because it might be dangerous for her baby – or forcing herself to eat something that she does not like just because it helps her body to produce more milk, cleaning up after her baby, enduring his/her crying and whims are all things that only a mother can endure. Every woman who becomes a mother, takes care of her baby, and tries to do what is best for her baby is indeed a real hero.

Fathers are heroes, as well. They always work hard to bring lawfully earned food and income to their home and regularly assist their wives at home. They do their best in order to bring up their children with the best of character and provide them with the best of education.

It is unconceivable for children to understand how much happiness is felt by their parents when they are born, and how great many sacrifices their parents make for their sake. In fact, they may only truly appreciate what their parents did for them once they themselves become parents. Therefore, both our Lord Almighty and our Prophet (pbuh) cautions us regarding knowing the value of our parents and to not to hurt their feelings. We must show utmost respect to our parents and attend to them. There is only one situation whereby we are obliged not to obey them, which is when they ask for something that is prohibited by the religion of Islam.

Running an errand in order to bring something that our mother asked for, or meeting our father at the door when he comes home from work in the evening, and preparing their tea or coffee are some of the examples of ways of serving our parents and showing our respect to them. Helping them in their daily chores and doing our best to make them feel comfortable are the worthiest ways of showing respect. Of course, all these acts of assistance, love and respect should be carried out courteously and readily...

Assisting them in their works saying "I can do this", for example, informing our father "Dad, I can go shopping for you" or saying to our mother, "Mom, I can wash the dishes or I can clean the house for you" are all examples of serving and attending to their needs and requirements.

Moreover, not to lie down disrespectfully in front of them, or when they enter the room to stand up in front of them in a humble way, are all signs of showing our respect to them. Not interrupting them when they speak, not raising our voice when we talk to them, doing what they ask unless it is something prohibited in Islam, or saying nice things to make them happy are also ways of showing our respect to them. Saying after eating our meal "Thank you mom, it was delicious" or "Thank you dad for bringing us this food, may Allah bless your earnings" are some of the easiest words of respect. Even having good relations with our siblings is a way of showing respect, because it would make our parents happy. Visiting their friends and relatives when our parents are still alive or after they pass away is also a sign of showing respect.

When supplicating to Allah asking for health and wellbeing for our parents, asking Allah to forgive them, and giving charities on behalf of our parents, when they are alive or after they pass on, are examples of valuable ways of displaying our respect to them.

Our parents are the most valuable people in this world to whom we are not even allowed to say "Ugh". There cannot be anything better than making our parents happy and getting their pleasant prayers for us. Every deed that helps to make them happy and pleased is also a deed that makes Allah Almighty content with us.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM “THE BEST ONE”

MY BELOVED PROPHET (PBUH) IS MY BEST EXAMPLE IN SHOWING RESPECT TO AND SERVING PARENTS

THE SECOND GREATEST SIN AFTER ASCRIBING PARTNERS TO ALLAH

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) often had friendly conversations with his Companions. He loved to teach them the principles of Islam and his Companions listened to his words with utmost attention. In one such occasion, Allah’s Messenger asked his Companions:

“Shall I inform you of the greatest of the major sins?” and he repeated his question three times because of its importance.

His Companions replied: “Yes O Messenger of Allah!”

He said: “Ascribing partners to Allah and showing disobedience to parents.” (al-Bukhari, Shahadat, 10)

Why do you think disobedience to the parents is the second greatest sin, which comes right after ascribing partners to Allah?

Fulfilling what kind of our parents’ requests does not constitute a sin?

ONE WHO DESERVES TO BE TREATED BEST IN THIS LIFE

One day a man came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and asked him with a lot of excitement of how to learn to be a good Muslim:

“O Allah’s Messenger (pbuh)! Who is more entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me?”

The Prophet (pbuh) said, “Your mother.”

The man said, “Who is next?”

The Prophet said, “Your mother.”

The man further said, “Who is next?”

The Prophet (pbuh) said, “Your mother.”

The man asked for the fourth time, “Who is next?”

The Prophet (pbuh) said, “Your father.” (al-Bukhari, Adab, 2)

Why did Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) respond to the man’s questions as “your mother” three times?

Does Allah’s Messenger reply “your father” the fourth time show that the father’s rights are less important?

THE PROPHET WHO LAYS HIS GARMENT ON THE GROUND

One day when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was sitting, his foster-father came forward. He spread out a part of his garment to let his foster father to sit on it.

Then his foster mother came forward towards him and he spread out the other side of his garment to let her to sit on it. A while later, his foster-brother came forward. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) stood up for him and then seated him before himself. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 119-120/5145)



What might the foster mother and foster father of our Prophet (pbuh) have felt when he treated them with such respect?

.....

.....

What might the foster brother of our Prophet (pbuh) have felt seeing the Prophet's display of respect to his father and mother?

.....



RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
When I and my mother are returning from the market with bags in our hands	I would realize that my mother is very tired	I would try to carry most of the bags.
When I walk with my parents in the street,	I would think that it would be disrespectful to walk in front of them,	..... .....
After eating our meal,	I would think that my father worked to buy it and my mother worked to cook it,	I would say, "Thank you mother, it was delicious" and "Thank you father, may Allah bless your earnings."
If my parents wrongfully accuse me of something that I did not do,	..... .....	I would prove to them that I am innocent without raising my voice.
I know that my elders, like my grandparents, are like my parents,	I would think that all my elders deserve to be respected,	I would treat them like I treat my parents.
One day if I leave my parents' house by getting married,	I would think how difficult it would be for them to stay alone,	..... .....
One day when my parents get old,	I would know that they would need help and mercy like a little child,	..... .....

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

MY MOM'S MOMENT OF DEATH



Sa'd b. 'Ubada's (r.a.) mother passed on when he was not present with his mother. He felt very sad and guilty for not being there for his mother at her last breath. How much he would have loved to be with her and make her happy in her final days, but it had not been possible. He came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and asked:

- "O Messenger of Allah! My mother passed away in my absence. Will it be of any benefit for her if I give charity on behalf of her?"

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) replied: - "Yes, it will."

Then Sa'd (r.a.) said: - "O Messenger of Allah! Be my witness that I give this orchard as a charity on behalf of my mother" and he donated a garden that he loved very much on behalf of his mother. He was hoping to make her mother spiritually happy by the spiritual rewards of this charity. (al-Bukhari, Wasaya, 15)

What would have Sa'd done if he could have been there before his mother passed on?

.....

What other good deeds can we do after our parents pass away in order to comfort their souls?

.....

A MOTHER'S SUPPLICATION

Abu Hurayra (r.a.) used to live in a separate house than the one his mother lived in, and when he left his house, he would first go to his mother's house and call for her at the door saying:

- "May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you my beloved mother!"

His mother would reply saying: - "May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you too my son!"

Then Abu Hurayra (r.a.) would say: - "May Allah show mercy upon you as you showed mercy upon me and brought me up when I was a child!"

His mother would reply:- "May Allah show mercy upon you as you did good to me and were benevolent to me in my old age. May Allah be pleased with you and reward you!"

When Abu Hurayra returned to his home, he would do the same. (al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 12, 14)

Why do you think Abu Hurayra (r.a.) acted in such a way?

.....

What kind of benefit would he be getting from his mother's worthy supplications for him at the beginning and end of the day?

.....

Are you able to receive your parents' good supplications for you at the beginning and end of the day? What would you say to them? What would they say to you?

.....

THE MAN WHO GIVES THE BEDOUIN HIS DONKEY

One day, Umar's son Abdullah (r. anhumah) set out to go to Mecca together with his friends. They got tired and stopped to take a rest under the hot desert weather. Just then they saw a Bedouin. The poor man did not have a ride.

Abdullah (r.a.) asked:

- "Are not you son of such and such man?" When the man said "yes", Abdullah gave his donkey to the man. He also gave his turban and said:

- "Get on this and take this turban to cover your head."

One of his friends told Abdullah (r.a.):

- "May Allah forgive you. You gave your donkey and turban to this man in vain."

Abdullah (r.a.) responded to them by saying:

- "His father was loved dearly by my father Umar b. Khattab and I heard Allah's Messenger (pbuh) as saying: "The finest act of goodness on the part of a son is to treat kindly the loved ones of his father." (Muslim, Birr, 11-13)



What might Abdullah b. Umar have thought when he was giving his ride and turban to the man?

.....

What might Abdullah's father Umar (r.a.) have felt and thought if he had seen what his son did?

.....

If you were to do something nice for one of your father's friends, what would you do and for whom would you do it?

.....

TEST YOURSELF

HOW RESPECTFUL ARE YOU TO YOUR PARENTS?

1. **When you were doing your homework, your mom called you by saying, "Son! Could you bring me a glass of water?" What would you do?**
 - a) I am concentrating on my homework. I pretend like I did not hear her.
 - b) Even if I huff and puff, I would still go and bring the glass of water.
 - c) I say "Right away, mom" and bring her the glass of water.
 - d) I bring her the glass of water and ask if she needs anything else.
2. **The doorbell rang in the evening and obviously it was your father. What would you do?**
 - a) I immediately open the door and greet him by saying "Welcome dad"
 - b) Even if I am too lazy to open it, I still go and open the door.
 - c) I call my brother and he opens the door.
 - d) He has his keys. He can open the door himself.
3. **You are watching TV / or reading a book lying on the sofa. Just then your father or your mother enters the room. What would you do?**
 - a) I do not do anything. What should I do?
 - b) I stand up and give them my place.
 - c) I sit up.
 - d) I offer a place for my father/mother to sit saying "have a seat dad/mom" and then ask about his/her health and have a conversation with him/her.
4. **While your parents are talking, an idea comes to your mind. What would you do?**
 - a) I would immediately interrupt them and tell them my idea.
 - b) I would wait for an appropriate time and tell them my idea without interrupting them.
 - c) I would not tell them my idea and they would continue their talk.
 - d) They are talking amongst themselves and I do not have to listen to them.
5. **You mother asked something from you which made you so angry. What would you do?**
 - a) If it is not something prohibited in Islam, I would fulfill her request even if it is difficult.
 - b) If it is something that I do not like to do, I try to convince her to not do it.
 - c) I yell at her "Do not mess with my business, mom!"
 - d) I say nothing and do nothing.
6. **When you become a father/mother, if your children show you respect, how would you feel and what would you do? Which one is most appropriate?**
 - a) I would feel happy and peaceful.
 - b) I would pray to Allah for them.
 - c) I would kiss and hug them
 - d) The more they try to make me happy the more I would try to make them happy. It would be as if there was a contest of doing goodness in our home.



EMPATHY

IF YOU GET TOO ANGRY...

You come back from school. You are very tired. Your head is aching due to sitting and listening to classes all day long. Moreover, you have so many homework assessments to complete. Unlike every day, your mother does not meet you at the door today.

You enter the house. You are hungry and you go directly to the kitchen, but there is nothing to eat. Your mother did not cook anything today. Your siblings are playing in the living room. It is obvious that they are hungry as well. You are very upset and angry, because you are both feeling extremely tired and you know that you have so many assignments to do.

You look for your mother and find her lying in the bed. You come closer towards her and ask her "How are you, mom?"

She says, "I am not fine" and further adds:

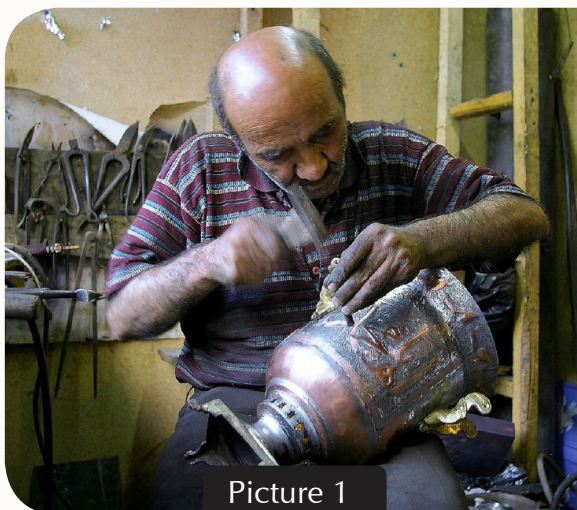
"There are some potatoes lying in the kitchen that can be cooked. Can you make something from them before your father comes home?"

You want to say "No, I cannot". You also want to cry and say, "I have so many things to do." However, your siblings are hungry and your father always comes home tired and hungry after a long work day. You want to say "What did you do mom throughout the day?" However, it looks like something bad has happened to her. Otherwise, she would never do that. You tell to yourself, "I should calm down first," but you feel so angry. What will you do now?



INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



Picture 1



Picture 2

1. What do you see in the pictures?
.....
2. How much do you think one day work of these people in the pictures is worth? Why?
.....
3. If they were your parents, and you were to pay the price of their labor, how would you pay it?
.....
4. In your opinion, what could be the thing that a man's children can do to make their father most pleased when he comes home in the evening?
.....
5. In your opinion, what could be the thing that a woman's children can do to make their mother unhappiest when she comes home in the evening?
.....
6. If the man and the woman in the pictures were your parents, what would you like to tell them at that moment? Why?
.....
7. What are the most important three things that can make a mother and father happy with their children?
.....
8. What kind of respect would your mother like you to show her? Why?
.....
9. What kind of respect would your father like you to show him? Why?
.....
10. What are the reasons that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told his Companions, who came to him and asked whom he should love and respect most, three times "Your mother" and the fourth time he said, "Your father"?
.....



STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

OBEDIENCE TO MOTHER

Veysel Qarani's heart was burning with the longing for seeing the Messenger of Allah. His only wish was to see the blessed face of the Prophet (pbuh) and watch him as long as he wanted. His day passed with this hope, but his mother needed his care and help. One day he said to his mother:

- "Mom! If you give me your permission, I would like to go and see the blessed face of our Prophet. Let me visit him in Medina and I will immediately come back after my visit."

Veysel Qarani's mother thought for a while and then she said,

- "I will let you go on one condition. You will visit the Messenger of Allah at his home. If you cannot find him, you will not wait and come back to me immediately."

Having got his mother's permission, Veysel Qarani set out to Medina with the longing for seeing the Messenger of Allah. After a long journey, he arrived in Medina. He asked people for the directions to the Prophet's home and they showed him. He excitedly knocked the door.

Aisha (r.anha) replied: - "Who is it?"

Veysel Qarani replied: - "I am Veysel coming from a village from Yemen. I would like to see the Messenger of Allah."

Aisha (r. anha) said: - "He is not home. He will be back soon."

Veysel Qarani sadly said: - "Oh no! I cannot wait. My mother did not give me permission to wait. She is waiting for me."

Aisha (r.anha) asked: - "O servant of Allah! Who are you?"

Veysel Qarani replied: - "My name is Veysel. I am from the Qaran village of Yemen. I am a shepherd. I got permission from my mother to visit the Messenger of Allah. It seems that it is not my destiny to see him." Then he went back.

When the Messenger of Allah came from mosque, he said:

- "O Aisha! Did Uways (Veysel) come here? He will not see me in this world. Allah Almighty is testing him and checking the level of his obedience to his mother."

Veysel Qarani returned back home and told his mother what had happened. He was very sad and his mother consoled him by saying,

- "Do not be sad. Since you have made me happy, Allah Almighty will make you happy. You will see our beloved Prophet in the Hereafter."

MOTHER'S LOVE

The little boy came to his mother and extended her the paper he had. She started to read it:

For mowing the lawn: 5 Liras

For cleaning up my room: 2 Liras

For going shopping: 2 Liras

For looking after my little brother: 2 Liras

For taking out the trash: 2 Liras

For getting good grades: 5 Liras

For cleaning up the garden: 2 Liras

Total money owed: 20 Liras



The mother looked at her son gazing at her with hopeful eyes. She picked up a pencil and wrote at the back side of the paper as follows:

For carrying you for nine months: Free

For looking after you when you get sick: Free

For praying for your goodness: Free

For shedding tears for you for various reasons: Free

For staying awake and sleepless for you for many nights: Free

For cleaning up your clothes, cooking your meals: Free

When you add all these my young son, you will see that the price of real love is not of this world, because it is priceless.

When the little boy read what his mother wrote, his eyes filled up with tears. He said, "Mommy, I love you so much. He picked up the pencil from his mother's hand and wrote on the paper in capital letters:

ALL PAID IN ADVANCE

He stood up, and hugged and kissed his mother.



CLASS ACTIVITY

CONFESSION

The following table is filled by the students without writing their names on it. Then, some of what they write is read to the whole class and certain questions are asked such as "For what reasons can this kind of action be carried out?" Then based on the question "For what reasons will such an action be carried out in different ways?" The proper behaviors of showing respect to parents are determined.



I CONFESS ONCE I DID

**HOWEVER,
NOW**

To my mother

.....

.....

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.....

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.....

.....

.....

To my father

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To my grandmother

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To my grandfather

I pretend like I did not hear when he asked me to itch his back and I showed disrespect towards him.

I now know I made a vast mistake. I will never refuse his requests again.

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW?

THOSE WHO ARE RESPECTFUL TO THEIR PARENTS			
	INDIVIDUALS	FAMILIES	SOCIETIES
How do they look like economically? Is there any relation between showing respect to the parents and the economic state?
Is there any difference in their health? Is there any relation between showing respect to the parents and health?
What can be the common characteristics of those who show respect to their parents?
What can be the common characteristics of those who do not show respect to their parents

CHAPTER 15



BEING CONTENT AND GRATEFUL

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"And there is no living creature on earth but depends for its sustenance on Allah..." (Hud, 11: 6)

All creation from the fish in the seas to the birds in the skies, from the ants under the ground to the people in the deserts maintain their lives by the provisions bestowed upon them by Allah. Endless thanks to our Lord Almighty.

"This, verily, shall be Our provision [for you], with no end to it!"
(Sad, 38: 54)

Allah has bestowed upon us endless blessings. I should be aware of them and be grateful to benefit from them.

"And [remember the time] when your Sustainer made [this promise] known: 'If you are grateful [to Me], I shall most certainly give you more and more; but if you are ungrateful, verily, My chastisement will be severe indeed!'" (Ibrahim, 14: 7)

I understand that Allah Almighty loves His thankful servants and becomes angry at His ungrateful servants. O Allah! Please do not let me become one of those who are ungrateful to Your blessings.

"and, indeed, we granted this wisdom unto Luqman: "Be grateful unto Allah - for he who is grateful [unto Him] is but grateful for the good of his own self; whereas he who chooses to be ungrateful [ought to know that], verily, Allah is self-sufficient, ever to be praised!""
(Luqman, 31: 12)

O Allah! I know you do not need my thanks. All creatures in the universe already thank You. However, if I express my gratitude to You, this would make me a good servant.

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET

MY PROPHET SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

“Every important matter which is not begun by an expression of praise to Allah is maimed.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 18)

If I begin my actions by praising Allah, that action becomes blessed.

“He is indeed successful who has accepted Islam, who has been provided with sufficient for his needs and been made contented by Allah with what He has given him.” (Muslim, Zakat, 125)

If I become content with what I have, I will be happy both in this world and in the Hereafter.

“If the son of Adam had money equal to a valley, then he would wish for another similar to it, for nothing can satisfy the eye of Adam’s son except dust. And Allah forgives him who repents to Him.” (al-Bukhari, Riqaq, 10)

Human beings are so greedy that they always want more. I should be careful about this matter and learn how to be content.

“If anyone of you looked at a person who was made superior to him in property and (in good) appearance, then he should also look at the one who is inferior to him.” (al-Bukhari, Riqaq, 30)

When I see people who are richer, stronger, and more beautiful than me, I will not think why I am not like them. I will look at those who are poorer and weaker than me and thank my Lord.

“Allah is pleased with His servant who says: al-Hamdulillah after eating or drinking something.” (Muslim, Dhikr, 89; al-Tirmidhi, At’ima, 18)

I should remember Allah before eating or drinking something by saying “bismillah” and show my thanks to Him by saying “al-Hamdulillah” after I finish eating or drinking.

A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

BEING CONTENT IS THE KEY FOR PEACE AND TRANQUILITY

By looking around, can you say that “Those who earn more and have great wealth, or those who are healthy, or those who occupy high positions, are happy and that other people are not”? How accurate is the statement “Happiness means to have more, better and superior things”? Of course, it is inaccurate. Because how many people in the world can be in positions?

Children and youth are continuously bombarded with the importance of working hard, not wasting time, getting high grades, gaining more prosperity, and earning more money. They are told this so much so that sometimes these youths may even take the opportunity to do wrong actions in order to reach those goals. Still, is not every bit success that we achieve without going astray to the wrong path, and the earning of our own legitimate efforts with the peace of mind a path to achieve happiness in both the worlds? Happiness cannot be achieved by possessing more and more, nor by feeling to be the best or superior, but rather by being content with what we have. In fact, there are many people who earn a lot of wealth and are in such good positions, but are still not able to find happiness in their lives.

This world is filled with people who are healthy but still unhappy. Those who have only a couple of pieces of clothes may consider themselves poor when they compare themselves to those who have wardrobes filled with clothes. Those who have only a couple of toys may consider themselves needy when they compare themselves to those with boxes of toys. Those who live in rental places may be comparing themselves to those who own a house and regard themselves as poor. Those who own a two-bedroom apartment may be comparing themselves to those who own a three-bedroom apartment and may regard themselves as poor. When those who own an acre of land look at those who have tens of acres of land, they may feel sorry for themselves and think “If we had all these lands, we could produce more crops.” Those who have disabilities may compare themselves to those who are ill; and those who have permanent diseases may compare themselves to those





who have temporary ones. However, the truth is that all such thoughts offers a person nothing but unhappiness.

Though, there is always a way to become happy: being content with the little things we have and thankful for having them. In other words, no matter with what our Lord Almighty is testing us, looking always to those who are inferior to us and being content with what we have is the key for real peace and tranquility.

When we are content and thankful for what we have, we can know how to be patient, how to share, how to be generous, and how to be prudent and not waste our possessions. All these moral values first give peace to our heart and then to the hearts of those who are around us.

No matter how much we have, we always owe a gratitude to our Creator. Since even thanking a person who gives us a glass of water and a slice of bread is a moral duty upon us, would it not be our most important duty to thank our Lord for His innumerable blessings? Our heart and other organs work perfectly even when we are sleeping; The Sun, the Moon, and the Earth fulfill their duties without delaying even for a second; there is always water and air in this world or the two main sources of all kinds of provisions. In other words, we in fact have endless blessings to be thankful for and we do not need to wait for more blessing in order to be content and then to show our gratitude. This is because there is no end in sight for the expectation of more and better.

Our Lord Almighty draws our attention to what we have, informs us that providing for provisions is carried out by Him, and commands us to be content and thankful servants. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) shows us the ways of how to do that and opens for us the gates of happiness in both worlds. Being content and thankful are therefore the greatest wealth.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"

MY BELOVED PROPHET, MY BEST EXEMPLAR IN BEING CONTENT AND GRATEFUL

THE GIFT

Umar b. al-Khattab (r.a.) attended many battles and manifested heroic deeds in battles. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was very happy with that and wanted to give a gift to Umar (r.a.) as a reward for his heroism. Umar (r.a.) was, on the other hand, a very content and grateful man. He did not want to accept the gifts and said,

- "O messenger of Allah! Would you give it to a poorer and needier one than I?"

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) replied:

- "Take it. If you are given something from this property, without asking for it or having greed for it, take it; and if it is not given, do not run for it." (al-Bukhari, Zakat, 51)

Why did Umar not want to take the gift given by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)?

What is the difference between not accepting a gift because of being content and refusing it because of not needing it?

NOT ASKING ANYTHING FROM ANYBODY

The following incident narrated by Awf b. Malik (r.a.) is a very good example for contentment, which our Prophet (pbuh) taught his Companions and he taught them also not to be a burden upon other people.

Awf b. Malik narrates: We, nine, eight or seven men, were in the company of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and he said: "Why don't you pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah?"

Since we had recently pledged allegiance. So we said: "O Messenger of Allah, we have already pledged allegiance to you."

He again said: "Why don't you pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah?"

And we said: "O Messenger of Allah, we have already pledged allegiance to you."

He again said: "Why don't you pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah?"

We stretched out our hands and said: "O Messenger of Allah. We have already pledged allegiance to you. Now tell (on what things) should we pledge allegiance to you."

He said: "(You must pledge allegiance) that you would worship Allah only and would not associate with Him anything, (and observe) five prayers, and obey- (and he said one thing in an undertone) - that you would not beg people of anything."

(And as a consequence of that) I saw that some of these people that took the oath did not even ask anyone to pick up the whip for them if it fell down. (Muslim, Zakat, 108)

Why is it important for a person to do his own task and not ask any help from others?

What would be the harm of having expectation from other people to do our job while we can do it ourselves? What would people think about such a person?

RECOGNIZE ➡ FEEL ➡ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
If my father works, but does not earn much	I would feel sad for not being able to eat and drink everything we want	However, I would still thank Allah for our situation, thinking that there are those who are in a worse situation than us. I also thank my father for doing his best to provide for our family's livelihood.
If my parents give me a gift,	Even if I get disappointed from seeing that it is something cheaper and simpler than I expected.	..... ..... .....
.....	I would not like it and think that "He should have given me more"	However, I still thank Allah thinking "He at least gave this even if it is not as much as I expected."
If my mother heats up and brings the not so tasty meal that she cooked three days ago to the table	..... ..... .....	I would never belittle the food and leave the table. I would try to eat as much as I can and satisfy my hunger.
If we were hungry and needy for the last couple of days	I would feel sad "Because nobody visited us and offered us help"	..... ..... .....
If one of my friends offers to help me to do my homework because I will get a low grade for not finishing my homework on time	...............	...............
..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....	However, I would think "This is the best he could do" and never break his heart. I would try to help him

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

THRESHOLD

After Ishmael's mother had died, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) came to visit him after Ishmael's (pbuh) marriage. He wanted to see his family that he had left behind, but he did not find Ishmael there. When he asked Ishmael's wife about him, she replied,

"He has gone in search of our livelihood." Then he asked her about their way of living and their condition, and she replied complaining to him,

"We are living in misery; we are living in hardship and destitution." He said,

"When your husband returns, convey my salutation to him and tell him to change the threshold of the gate (of his house)."

When Ishmael (pbuh) came, he seemed to have felt something unusual, so he asked his wife,

"Has anyone visited you?" She replied,

"Yes, an old man of so-and-so description came and asked me about you and I informed him, and he asked about our state of living, and I told him that we were living in a hardship and poverty."

On that Ishmael said, "Did he advise you of anything?"

She replied, "Yes, he told me to convey his salutation to you and to tell you to change the threshold of your gate."

Ishmael said, "It was my father, and he has ordered me to divorce you. Go back to your family."

So, Ishmael divorced her and married another woman from amongst the tribe of Jurhum.

Then Abraham stayed away from them for a period as long as Allah wished, and then he called upon them again, but did not find

Ishmael. So he came to Ishmael's wife and asked her about Ishmael.

She said, "He has gone in search of our livelihood."

Abraham asked her about their sustenance and living,

"How are you getting on?"

She replied, "We are prosperous and well-off (i.e. we have everything in abundance)." Then she thanked Allah.

Abraham said, "What kind of food do you eat?"

She said, "Meat."

He said, "What do you drink?"

She said, "Water."

He said, "O Allah! Bless their meat and water."

Then Abraham said to Ishmael's wife,

"When your husband comes, give my regards to him and tell him that he should keep firm the threshold of his gate."

When Ishmael came back, he asked his wife,

"Did anyone call on you?"

She replied, "Yes, a good-looking old man came to me," so she praised him and added,

"He asked about you, and I informed him, and he asked about our livelihood and I told him that we were in a good condition."

Ishmael asked her, "Did he give you any piece of advice?"

She said, "Yes, he told me to give his regards to you and ordered that you should keep firm the threshold of your gate."

On that Ishmael said, "It was my father, and you are the threshold (of the gate). He has ordered me to keep you with me." (al-Bukhari, Anbiya, 9)

Why do you think that being ungrateful is so important that it may cause the separation of a family?

Why do you think the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) thought that his son Ishmael would be happier with a content wife?

TEST YOURSELF

HOW CONTENTED ARE YOU?

1. **Among your friends there are some who live in beautiful houses. What does this situation lead you to think?**
 - a) How bad your economic situation is.
 - b) Why Allah Almighty gives more means to some.
 - c) That we have at least a house to live, while some other people do not.
 - d) That those beautiful houses may one day even be destroyed by an earthquake.
2. **Among your friends, there are very clever and hardworking ones. How does their superiority affect you?**
 - a) I am only concerned with using the intellect and abilities that Allah has bestowed upon me.
 - b) I complain constantly by saying "I wish I were like them"
 - c) I study hard to be better than they are.
 - d) I think, "Since I am less gifted, I should not try in vain."
3. **You called your neighbor's son outside to play. He is wearing a nice new garment. What would you feel?**
 - a) I would feel jealous and think, "Why do my parents not buy me new clothes?"
 - b) I sigh thinking, "I wish I had new clothes too"
 - c) I think, "I have everything. My daddy works hard, but this is the best he can do."
 - d) I hope that his clothes stick somewhere when playing and get torn apart.
4. **Amongst your classmates, there is a very handsome/beautiful person. How would you feel / what would you do?**
 - a) I try various ways to show that I am beautiful too.
 - b) At every opportunity I would get, I try to prove that he/she is actually not so beautiful.
 - c) I try to show that only his/her face is beautiful, but his/her heart is bad.
 - d) When I look at him/her, I remember that beauty is a gift and blessing of Allah.
5. **Your shoes are too old, but your father told you that he cannot buy a new one at the moment. What would you do?**
 - a) I would cry a lot. Maybe then he would buy it.
 - b) I would get angry at my father, then he would understand how much I need it.
 - c) I would become sad, but wait. I am sure when my dad has money he will buy it.
 - d) I would beg from people. I am sure one of them feel sorry for me and buy me one.
6. **You are the only disabled one amongst your friends. What do you think??**
 - a) I feel very sorry for my fate and sometimes I may even protest at my fate.
 - b) I cannot stand the looks of my friends and I do not go to school.
 - c) I look at those who are worse than me and then thank Allah. I do my best to finish my school and be beneficial to humankind.
 - d) I think that it is a great blessing for my friends. They can look at me and thank Allah for their health.

EMPATHY



TODAY YOUR FATHER DID NOT BRING HOME ANY PROVISIONS

After a long and tiring day, you came home from school. You studied hard at school. You also played with your friends and got tired. On your way home, you realized how hungry you were and you thought, "I hope my mom has prepared dinner." You wondered what she had cooked. Could it be your favorite meal? Perhaps.

Deep in such thoughts, you arrived at home. Your mom welcomed you at the door, but she looked sad. You saluted her and she said, "Welcome son." The sadness was felt in her voice.

You pretended like you did not recognize anything, because you were so hungry. While washing your hands, you asked, "Mommy! Dinner is ready, isn't it?" Your mom sadly replied, "Well! Your dad was going to buy some materials with his daily wage today, but he isn't home yet. And we have nothing to cook at home."



You were so hungry that you could not accept any excuse. But you know your father was a day laborer. He worked at daily jobs and bought food with whatever he earned on that day, and then your mom cooked the meal. However, this was the first time that such a thing had happened. Yes, there were other worse than you are. However, you had some neighbors in your district whose situation was far better. If you asked them, they might help you. But, this would be like begging from people. You thought, "We should wait with our honor." Allah is the one who gives provisions. If you pray to Him, He would show you a way out. But you were so hungry, it was very difficult to wait. You were deep in different thoughts. What would you do?

INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



Picture 1



Picture 2

1. What do you see in the pictures?
.....
2. What are the common characteristics of the people in the pictures in terms of earning their livelihood?
.....
3. How much do you think the children in the first picture might be earning in a month and how much might they be spending?
.....
4. How long (months/years) do you think the children in the first picture wear their clothes?
.....
5. How long do you think the children in the second picture need to work to buy a trade-marked sports shoe or a t-shirt?
.....
6. Is there a difference in value between the 10 Liras you spend and 10 Liras they spend? Why?
.....
7. Based on these picture, what is the meaning of the statement "One who is not content with less cannot find more"?
.....
8. If you were those children, which things would you not do amongst the things that you have done today?
.....
9. If they saw how much you have spent today and advised you, what would they tell you?
.....
10. Is the statement "Contentedness is the greatest wealth" applicable to the affluent people as well? Why?
.....

STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

THE BLESSING OF KHALIL IBRAHIM

Once there were two brothers named Khalil and Ibrahim. Both of them worked and earned their living at the farms inherited from their fathers. One of the brothers was married and had children. The other one was single. At the end of the harvest season, the two brother would share their crop and earnings equally. One day, the single brother thought to himself,

“It is not fair for us to share our crops and earnings equally. I am alone and I do not need much property. Whereas my brother is married and has kids. He needs more than I do. If I offer my brother to take more, I am sure he will not accept it thinking that it would not be fair to me.”

From that day on, he started to take a sack of grains and secretly leave it in his brother's storage. Meanwhile the married brother thought to himself,

“It is not fair for us to share our crops and earnings equally. I am married and have kids. My children can take care of me when I get old. Whereas, my brother is alone.”

Thus, the older brother started to take a sack of grains and secretly leave it in his brother's storage. For a long time, both brothers did not understand what was going on because the amount of grains in their storage was not changing.

Then one night when the brothers were carrying the sacks of grains, they ran into each other. Just then they realized what had happened. They left the sacks on the ground and hugged each other.



Because of their good intentions and contentedness of what they had, Allah Almighty had blessed their earnings. They never suffered from poverty. They always helped the needy with their means.

This story is told among the people as the story of the Khalil and Ibrahim brothers. Due to this incident, the phrase “The Blessing of Khalil Ibrahim” began to be used for a blessing that does not decrease but always increases.

CLASS ACTIVITY

THE PERIODS OF MY DEVELOPMENT AND MY COMPLAINTS

The table given below is written on the board. The students take turn and attempt to guess the possible complaints one could have in one of the periods of human development and they make suggestions regarding situations that may during this period bring happiness.

THE PERIODS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	POSSIBLE COMPLAINTS IN THIS PERIOD	SUGGESTIONS TO BE HAPPY
Period of Infancy (Ages 0-2)
Period of Childhood (Ages 2-10)
Period of Puberty (Ages 11-16)
Period of Youth (Ages 17-21)
Period of Young Adulthood (Ages 22-35)
Period of Middle Age (Ages 36-59)
Period of Old Age (Ages 60 and more)

The activity ends by discussing the effects of being content and grateful in every period of human development.

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW

WHAT WOULD I GAIN WHEN I FEEL CONTENT AND GRATEFUL?	WHAT WOULD MY COUNTRY GAIN?
1 Example: I do not waste my money on useless things.	The resources of my country does not run out.
2 Example: Because I do not focus my attention on spending, I can concentrate on other things.	Because I will be more productive, my country will develop more.
3 Example: I become peaceful because greed makes a person sick inside.	A country formed from peaceful people becomes healthier, which means less health expenditures for the country.
4 ..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....
5 ..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....
6 ..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....
7 ..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....
8 ..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....

CHAPTER 16



BEING BRAVE AND PATRIOTIC

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"[and such will always be His way with] those who convey Allah's messages [to the world], and stand in awe of Him, and hold none but Allah in awe: for none can take count [of man's doings] as Allah does!" (al-Ahzab, 33: 39)

Not fearing anything except Allah is a characteristic of the prophets. Bravery is the most important shield of the prophets who start their mission alone to deliver the divine message. Those who properly fear Allah do not fear anything else.

"Those who have been warned by other people, "Behold, a host has gathered against you; so beware of them!" - Whereupon this only increased their faith, so that they answered, "Allah is enough for us; and how excellent a guardian is He!"" (Al Imran, 3: 173)

If there is an attack on my homeland, I will never be afraid of them. I will trust in and depend on Allah. Homeland means religion. Homeland means honor. It is an act of worship to endure the hardship for the sake of the homeland.

"It is but Satan who instils [into you] fear of his allies: so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are [truly] believers!" (Al Imran, 3: 175)

Cowardice is a characteristic of the friends of Satan. There is nothing to be afraid of except Allah. I am only afraid of losing Allah's pleasure and contentment. I do not need to fear anybody. Allah is enough for me.

"Say: "Never can anything befall us save what Allah has decreed! He is our Lord Supreme; and in Allah let the believers place their trust!"" (al-Tawba, 9: 51)

I do not need to be afraid of whether something happens to me when I am required to be brave. Because nothing happens except that Allah Almighty has destined it for us. I must place my trust in Him and ask His help.

"[Remember the time] when you fled, paying no heed to anyone, while at your rear the Prophet was calling out to you - wherefore He requited you with woe in return for [the Prophet's] woe, so that you should not grieve [merely] over what had escaped you, nor over what had befallen you: for Allah is aware of all that you do." (Al Imran, 3: 153)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) did not run from the battlefield even at the fieriest moments of the fight. On the contrary, he called them back and taught them to fight bravely. A Muslim knows that only Allah, who is the Giver of lives, can take life back.

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH)

MY PROPHET SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"O Allah! I seek refuge with you (Allah) from (worries) care and grief, from incapacity and laziness, from miserliness and cowardice, from being heavily in debt and from being overpowered by other men." (al-Bukhari, Da'awat, 38)

Cowardliness is a bad characteristic from which we need to seek refuge in Allah. From now on, I will ask in my supplications to Allah to bestow upon me bravery.

"One night the people of Medina felt disturbed and set forth in the direction of a sound when Allah's Messenger (pbuh) met them on his way back as he had gone towards that sound ahead of them. He was on the horse of Abu Talha, which had no saddle over it, and a sword was slung around his neck, and he was saying: "There was nothing to be afraid of."" (Muslim, Fadail, 11)

When there is something that may scare us, we need to confront it and be sure that everything is all right.

Ali (r.a.) says, "In the Battle of Badr, I looked at myself and saw that (as the enemy attacked us) we took refuge in the Messenger of Allah and took him as a shield for ourselves. He was braver than anybody else. On that day, there were nobody closer to the enemy lines than the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)." (Musnad, 654)

I have learned that our Prophet Muhammad Mustafa was the bravest person in the battles in those days when the battles were fought face to face. How amazingly brave was my Prophet (pbuh). I will try to be a brave person like he was and learn how I can be brave.



A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

BEING BRAVE AT WAR TIMES AND BEING PATRIOTIC AT THE TIMES OF PEACE

War is very bad, isn't it friends? In war, houses, streets, and cities are destroyed. People are killed without making any distinction between children, women, old or young. The number of deaths, injuries and grievances is expressed in thousands. When the history of the world is examined, it is evident that the times of war are more than the times of peace. Even in the 21st century it is very painful to see that people lose their lives because of wars on our green earth; but although it is painful, it is still a reality. In the face of this painful reality, each person's protecting his country against the dangers and doing his part for the growth and strengthening of his country during the peace years is an indication of his bravery and patriotism.

Dear friends, courage primarily starts with small things. For example, defending a friend who has been wronged, protecting our brother, confessing our mistake when we do wrong, persevering and working to the end in works that require patience and perseverance, and confronting and overcoming our fears are all examples of courage. Then, as we grow, the issues that require courage also grow. The biggest issue that requires courage is that people do whatever is necessary for their homeland; even giving one's life when it is needed.

What should we do for our homeland where we live freely and comfortably? Working to improve our country's economy, technology, science, and defense industry is the first thing to do. Then we need to have the necessary equipment to prevent those who want to harm our country more or less, to stop them and God forbid if there is a situation of war, to do our part.

So, how can we be brave? Courage requires strong faith in what we do. In other words, if we believe in the necessity of developing our country in every aspect of life, when it is not war time, we will find the courage that we need. In war times, we find the courage to defend our homeland if we want freedom, not captivity.

When we take a look at the history of countries, we see that strong states somehow always harm the weak ones. This sometimes happens since directly or indirectly they exploit their resources, and sometimes attack, demolish and occupy their lands. And then persecution, torture, slavery, death, poverty, ruined cities and a destroyed history come one after another. What the so-called civilized states did in the recent past, first in Africa, then in Asia and in the Middle East, is obvious today. The countries that are attacked are generally the Muslim ones. However, the great states that only want to live with Islam and thus bring justice to the world are different; they do not oppress and exploit, but help and bring justice. That is because we have no choice but to be strong and develop. Loving our religion and our homeland requires working hard for it in both war and peace times. Leaving our personal and trivial interests behind for the sake of the interests of our country is the most important indicator that we really love our country.

When we become like this, it is not difficult to predict that all the people in our country will enjoy peace and tranquility. Furthermore, the homeland of the people who love it will become so great that they can bring justice and peace not only to their own countries, but also to the people of neighboring countries; even to the whole world.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM “THE BEST ONE”

MY BEST EXAMPLE FOR BRAVERY: MY BELOVED HERO, THE PROPHET

In the severe Battle of Uhud, Ubay b. Halaf, one of the polytheists of the Quraysh tribe, was heatedly demanding, “Where is Muhammad? Where is Muhammad?” and he was searching for him among the ranks.

While he was dismissingly attacking the Muslims, he saw the Prophet from afar and said, “O Muhammad! If you survive, let me not.” He then began to run ragingly towards our Prophet shouting. The Companions wanted to stop him and shouted,

“You cannot hurt him, stay back!” However, our Prophet (pbuh) challenged the furious pagan by saying,

“Let him come!” When the Companions were unable to stop Ubay, Allah’s Messenger said,

“Stand back, stand back!”

When Ubay b. Halaf came closer to him, he hesitated in the face of the heroic stance of the Prophet. He then tried to run away from Allah’s Messenger who called after him,

“O liar! Where are you running?” and he wounded Ubay in the neck with a violent sword blow and rolled him to the ground. (Ibn Sa’d, II, 46)

If you were there, would you be able to stand up to the notorious pagan who angrily attacked the Prophet? Why?

.....

In your opinion, what scared Ubay bin Halaf who initially seemed to be so brave?

.....

Where do you think the real brave people get their courage?

.....

What do you think is the difference between those who think they are brave and those who are really brave?

.....

THE ARMY CORNERED IN A VALLEY

One of the features of our Prophet (pbuh) was that he had a lot of courage. In fact, he was unaided when he invited the people to Islam. Being alone never scared nor intimidated him. Moreover, in the early years of Islam, the number of those who accepted Islam was very low. On the contrary, the number of those who wanted to destroy Islam was very high and they were also financially strong.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) faced great dangers in his sacred mission. His enemies made terrifying plans to kill him and extinguish the bright sun of Islam. They attacked the Muslims with powerful armies. However, our Prophet (pbuh) was not frightened by any of these, he did not give up and despair, but rather he continued to deliver the message of Islam.

Many years after the emigration to Medina, Mecca was conquered by the Muslim army and the Ka'bah was cleared of idols. Enraged by this development, the enemies gathered an army of 20,000 in a place called Hunayn to attack the Muslims. Informed about this situation, the Prophet (pbuh) marched on them with an army of 12,000 soldiers.

While the Muslim army was passing through a narrow valley, the enemy army suddenly ambushed the Muslims. Muslims started to disperse in the face of this sudden attack in the twilight of the night. In the face of this fierce attack of the enemy, there was only one brave man who did not retreat, and with a small number of friends he resisted the enemy. This courageous and brave hero who opposed the enemy was the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"O people, where are you going! I am Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah!" and continued to attack the enemy with full force and summoned the dispersing Muslims. One by one, the Muslims who heard his voice gathered around him again. They gathered their strength and courage to attack the enemy. The enemy was surprised by the Muslims' attack and they began to scatter and flee, and finally they were defeated. The war resulted in the victory of the Muslim army. Thus, Muslims were saved from a great danger.

At the most violent moment of the war, when everyone fell into a concern of their individual life, where did the Prophet (pbuh) find the courage to attack the enemy even if he was alone?

.....

In the Battle of Hunayn, what would have been the result if the Prophet and the Muslims gathering around him had been too afraid to come together again? Why?

.....

Why does not a person who believes in the principle "If I die, I will be a martyr, and if I live, I will be a veteran!" fear anything?

.....

FACE TO FACE WITH THE ENEMY

As soon as the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) set out on his journey of migration to Medina, his Companion Abu Bakr (r.a.) took shelter in a cave called Thawr. When the angry idolaters could not find our Prophet (pbuh) in Mecca, they said,

"We will give a hundred camels to the one who finds and brings or kills Muhammad and Abu Bakr."

Some of those who heard this announcement armed themselves with their swords and some acquired sticks. They went out of Mecca and started to search for them. Some of these people searching for the Prophet also took with them two tracking guides. These trackers were soon able to find the trace and track the Messenger of Allah and Abu Bakr. They followed their tracks to the foothills of Mount Thawr. A spider web had been built into the entrance of the cave, which was large enough to crawl into, and two pigeons had built nests besides it.

One of the trackers said,

"By God, they have not passed through this cave. The trace ends here."

Some of them came close to the entrance of the cave together with the notorious pagan Umayyah b. Halaf. At the entrance of the cave, they were so close to the Messenger of Allah and his faithful friend Abu Bakr that they were like face to face. At the same time, because the entrance of the cave was very narrow and dark, our beloved Prophet and Abu Bakr could see them, but the idolaters could not see them.

Abu Bakr (r.a.) was very alarmed and worried.

"O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "I do not care if they kill me. But, God forbid, if they do any harm to you, the whole Muslim ummah without you will be destroyed."

Our Prophet (pbuh) comforted him by saying,

"Don't worry, God is with us!" Abu Bakr said,

"O Messenger of Allah! If any one of them leans over and looks down, he will see us." As a brave and confident servant who took refuge in Allah, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said:

"O Abu Bakr, if the third one of the two is Allah, what do you think the conclusion will be? Do you think we will get caught?"

Then the Prophet (pbuh) prayed to God to alleviate and calm the worries of Abu Bakr. After these two loyal friends hid in the cave for two whole days, a trusted guide, whom they had previously agreed with, arrived at the cave with two camels, and they set out for Medina.

When the enemy was so close, how could the prophet (pbuh) be so brave? What do you think is the source of such real courage?

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Can the fear of Abu Bakr be called cowardice? Why?

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RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
If I am accused of a crime that I did not commit,	I would feel sad	I would find evidence to prove my innocence and defend myself.
If my teacher or my friend shows me my mistake	First I would feel embarrassed	But then I would bravely accept my error, apologize, and make up for my mistake.
If someone tries to harm my friend or brother,	I would feel like someone is trying to harm me,	So I would protect him.
If I see someone is polluting the street or is destroying the school property,	..... ..... .....	I would politely caution him
.....	I think that it would be harmful to my country and violation of the rights of everybody,	..... ..... .....
.....	I would love to contribute to my country in that field	And I would work hard and improve myself.
If other countries or their allies plot hostile plans against my homeland	...............	...............

HIS HEART MAY BE SMALL, BUT HIS COURAGE IS GREAT

When he was about to set out to Uhud, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was inspecting his army. He allowed young people who were old enough to join the war but turned down the younger ones. Samura b. Jundab and Rafi b. Khadij were among the ones who were rejected to enlist. These young people, about the age of 15, begged to be allowed to join the army, but they could not persuade the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Then Rafi's father stepped in, asking that he be allowed to join the army by saying,

- "O Messenger of Allah! Rafi is a good arrow shooter".

Rafi was wearing leather socks. He tried to look taller by standing on the tip of his toes. When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saw this young man and his courage, he allowed him to join the army. Upon this Samura went to his father,

- "Father! Allah's Messenger (pbuh) allowed Rafi to join the army, but he turned me down. Whereas, I can beat Rafi in wrestling."

Samura's father said to the Prophet,

- "O Messenger of Allah! You turned my son down and let Rafi join the army. But my son Samura is strong enough to defeat Rafi in wrestling.

The Messenger of Allah said to Rafi with a warm smile on his face,

- "Come on, wrestle. Thereupon, these two young men who competed in heroism, heroically wrestled and demonstrated all their strength. At the end, Samura defeated Rafi. Then the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) gave him permission to join the army as well. And the two of them joined the Battle of Uhud together. (al-Tabari, Tarikh, II, 505-6; al-Waqidi, I, 216)

What could be the reason for why Rafi and Samura were so eager to join the war?

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Does Rafi's and Samura's request for support from their fathers to accomplish a task indicate that they have little self-confidence and courage? Why?

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Who has the responsibility to fight the enemy when the danger of losing our religion and homeland arises? Why?

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A COURAGEOUS LADY

Safiyya (r. anha), the aunt of the Messenger of Allah, gathered in a house in Medina with women and children during the battle of the Trench. On the other side of the trench, the idolaters were in constant attack.

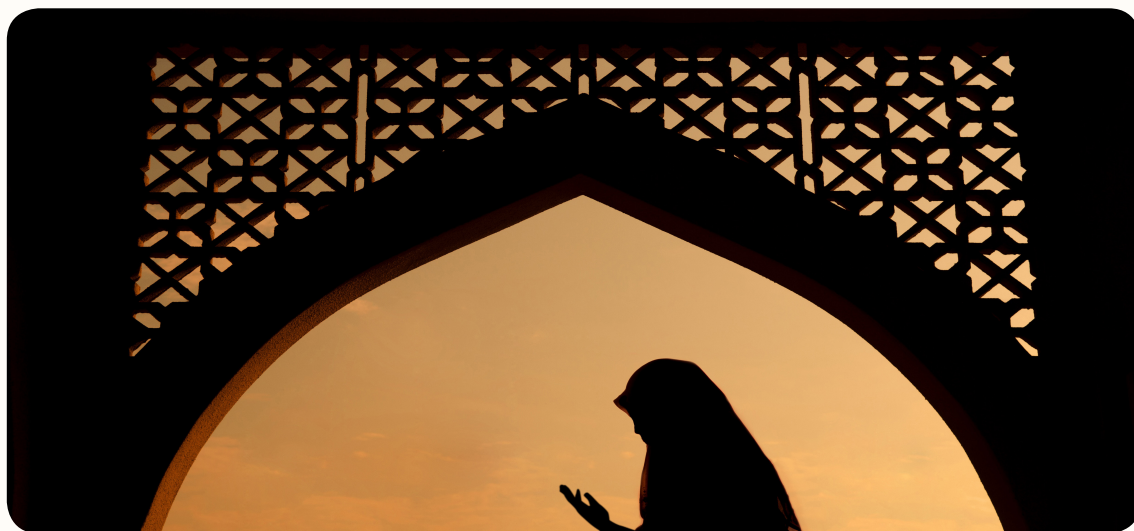
The Jews in Medina, on the other hand, were seeking an opportunity to deceive and betray the Muslims, even though they had made a peace agreement with the Muslims. A Jewish unit consisting of ten members came to the house where the women and children had taken shelter and tried to break into the house. One of the traitors began to walk around the house looking for a place to break in.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and all the male companions were at that moment in busy in the battle with the enemy by the trench. Safiyya, the aunt of our beloved Prophet, said to herself, "This is a desperate situation, and there are no militia to protect us. No one else is going to get us out of this difficulty except me. This task is truly my lot."

To hide her identity, she tied her head tightly with a cloth and then picked up a pole to use as a weapon. She then went downstairs, slowly approaching behind the Jew who was now near the front of the door. She hit the pole hard on his head and killed him.

Other Jews, who saw their friends lying on the ground dead became terrified. They said to each other, "We were told there were no guards protecting the women! However, there are male guards here who will kill us!"

Hence, Safiyya (r. anha) took a bold decision that saved innocent children and women. (al-Haythami, VI, 133-134; al-Waqidi, II, 462)



What might have happened if Safiyya (r anha) had been too afraid and waited instead for assistance?

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What were the reasons that forced her to do this, even though she was a woman?

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TEST YOURSELF

HOW BRAVE ARE YOU?

1. **What would you do if somebody wants to kidnap a little boy who is playing on the street?**
 - a) I would shout and call for help from people who are around.
 - b) I would say, "Come, brother!" and pretend like the child is my own brother and fool the kidnapper and save the child.
 - c) I would punch and frighten the kidnapper and then chase him.
 - d) I would say it is none of my business and continue what I was doing.
2. **You are alone at home with your brother. Just then, your brother cuts his hand and it bleeds a lot. What would you do?**
 - a) I would get scared. I would not know what to do, so I would sit down and begin to cry.
 - b) I would begin to cry and ask loudly for help from the neighbors.
 - c) I would immediately take a clean cloth in my hand, press it firmly onto the wound, and then I would ask for help from the neighbors.
 - d) I would wait for my parents to come home. I can do nothing else.
3. **Someone set something on fire at school. There is no adult around. What would you do?**
 - a) I would immediately direct my friends and send someone to inform the adults. I would then try to extinguish the fire together with them.
 - b) I would hug my friends and begin to cry.
 - c) I would go out and wait, and expect that somehow someone would do something.
 - d) I would calmly call the fire department.
4. **Someone removes the paving stones or damages the swings of the park where you play. What would you do?**
 - a) I say "Brother, they are ours, you cannot destroy them."
 - b) I would punch him and then I would run.
 - c) I would call the police.
 - d) I would not interfere at all.
5. **What would you do if someone curses your flag and burns it?**
 - a) I would punch him and beat him up.
 - b) I would act cautiously so that I do not get attacked.
 - c) I would notify the police.
 - d) I would gather a group around me and then attack him.
6. **There are groups in the country who want to break your unity and solidarity and want to establish a separate state. What would you do?**
 - a) I would invite people around me to brotherhood and unity.
 - b) I would say that we should solve our problems by talking, and not by fighting.
 - c) If they want to create confusion and conflict, it is their own business. I will not interfere.
 - d) I would get a gun and join in the fight against them immediately.



EMPATHY

A NICE OFFER

You are an orphan, your father has passed on, at the age of 13 or 14 who is very smart, open-minded, successful at school and aware of what is happening around her. You are interested in history, politics, country affairs, and you are already dreaming about a career in management and working in state administration.

On the other hand, your mother is suffering in the grip of a serious illness. You need a lot of money for her treatment and surgery.



Some people who are aware of your and your mother's condition and who are well-dressed and from high positions want to talk to you in private. First you feel nervous since you do not know who they are but then you gather your courage, and listen to what they have to say. They want you to inform them periodically about what your teachers and elders are talking about in the school, in the mosque and in the neighborhood, especially about issues relating to the country. In exchange for this simple task, they say that they will take care of your mother's treatment and help you.

You are surprised to find such a proposal when you are even ready to give your life for your mother. First, you think that the task is simple and you should not miss this offer. Then suddenly the light flashes in your head. You begin to think that these people may be some of those people who are trying to harm your country. In fact, they may shape their plans based on the information they get from you and use you for intelligence gathering. If what they do had not been a secret, they themselves could have done the thing that they asked from you. You think, "No, no, these surely are traitors!" But on the other hand, a voice inside you says, "Your mother's condition is very bad, it is worth everything! Moreover, it is not for sure that they are bad men; I am just being suspicious!" What would you do in such a situation?

INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



A MUSLIM'S CHARACTER -2-

1. What do you see in the pictures?
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2. In what environment was the photo taken and what are the people in the picture doing?
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3. Do you think the mother and son in the photo are brave and determined? Why?
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4. What challenges are the mother and son facing in their struggle to earn their living?
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5. What does it mean for the child to go ahead on such a bridge with the load on his back?
.....
6. What would you say if you compared this photo to your own life?
.....
7. Against what challenges do you need to be brave in your life?
.....
8. What do you think are the biggest obstacles before one may be brave and determined? Why?
.....
9. What would happen if the child in the photo lost his courage and self-confidence while walking on the narrow bridge? Why?
.....
10. What happens when you lose confidence because of the challenges you face?
.....
11. Have the wisdom of the following verses become realized in your life? How? "Indeed, there is ease with hardship. Most certainly, there is ease with hardship" (al-Sharh, 94: 5-6)
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STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

GREAT VICTORIES COME WITH BRAVE COMMANDERS

One of the great Ottoman sultans, Suleiman the Magnificent was quite old when he went for his last expedition, Szigetvar. For years, he successfully ruled the state and made great conquests. One day, the Grand Vizier Sokullu came to the presence of the great Sultan and said,

"O my Sultan, you have given countless victories to the Muslim ummah! You have gotten weary! You have dedicated your life to the world of Islam! It is very arduous to endure the hardship of this time at your age. Therefore, why do you not stay back in Istanbul and continue to rule the state? We, your viziers and pashas, will join the expedition. Do not be concerned about the expedition!"

Sultan Suleiman said to his Grand Vizier Sokullu,

"Listen carefully Sokullu! A sultan should always go to an expedition with his soldiers. When the soldier sees their sultan, their courage increases! The enemy's spiritual strength is disrupted, and discouraged. We have numerous experiences in government administration since childhood. There may be situations where this experience is needed urgently in this expedition. For this reason, although I am old, I will take part in this expedition! If I stay in the palace and die with my head on the pillow, on the Day of Judgment how can I face my ancestor who made great conquests?"

Sokullu said, "The decision is my sultan's" and finished speaking.

However, due to his advanced age how could the sultan complete a journey which was going to take months on a horseback? For that reason they put a tether on his back so that he could stand upright on the horse and appear vigorous to the soldiers.

They set out on the expedition. It was a rainy season. At one point the cannon carts got stuck in the swamp. The physical strength of the animals was not enough to free the cannons from the swamp. The army had advanced, there were few soldiers and pashas around. Suleiman the Magnificent immediately gave his orders,

"Everyone including all high ranking soldiers and pashas are ordered to get into the swamp and help push the cannon carts with their shoulders!" They all entered the swamp. The cannon carts were pushed away from the swamp with a sturdy amount of devout excitement. Sultan turned to the state historian and said,

"Write this down! Let the coming generations read and follow this example!"

The great Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent died shortly after this last campaign and the victory of Szigetvar, as the fourth Ottoman sultan who had also died during a campaign.

What do you think is the secret behind Sultan Suleiman's success?

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What kind of difficulties could the old and ill sultan have struggled with during that expedition?

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How did the heroism of this great sultan and the pashas, which took place in front of the eyes of the soldiers, spiritually influence them?

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IF I BECOME A MARTYR

Turkey witnessed a violent coup attempt during the night of July 15, 2016. When the President invited the people to the streets, everyone poured into the streets with Turkish flags in their hands and marched against the treacherous coup plotters.

Turkmen Tekin, a 43-year-old mother of three, was one of those people on the streets. It took only seconds for her to perform her ablution and prepare to go out on the streets. She hurried out of her house with slippers on her feet and said to her husband,

“For our homeland, come on quickly!”

After walking for a while, they took their water bottles in their hands and kept walking towards the airport where the President was going to arrive. Just then, the lights of the tank, which came all of a sudden from the opposite direction, were turned off. Along with a group of other people who did not notice the tank, Turkmen Tekin fell under the tank. When her husband pulled her out from under the tank, he took her into his arms with tears flowing down his cheeks. When he later talked about what happened that night, he said,

“It was as if the world had stopped at that moment. My wife was martyred in my arms.”

She was taken to the hospital but it was too late. Her body was later taken to the morgue and her husband insisted on seeing her lifeless body. He said,

“Her face was white and she was smiling at me.”

When her 20-year-old son recounted the story about that night later, he said,

“My mother used to make great efforts to raise us. She was very fond of her children. I was also out that night. Because they were going out, they called me home to look after my brothers. When she was alive, she would always say, “I wish I were a man so that I could fight and become a martyr!” Allah granted her martyrdom. I am proud of her; but I envy her.”

If Turkmen Tekin had not rushed out to go out that night, what might have happened?

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Have you ever thought that state tanks and so-called soldiers could kill their own people?

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What could be the reason that people with no guns could march against tanks on the night of the attempted coup?

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CLASS ACTIVITY

STAGES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND EXAMPLES OF COURAGE

The students look at the table below and then try to identify the examples of courage for each developmental period by brainstorming. Samples are written into the table as small notes. At the same time, it is debated whether or not one needs help and encouragement of the people from outside in order to be courageous.

THE STAGES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	SAMPLES OF COURAGE FOR THIS PERIOD	DO WE NEED HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF SOMEONE FROM OUTSIDE? WHOSE? WHY
Period of Infancy (Ages 0-2)	Walking on his own and start eating on his own	He/she needs his/her parents' help and encouragement. Because his/her muscle and mental development is still not sufficient.
Period of Childhood (Ages 2-10)	Defending his/her friend who has been treated unjustly	...............
Period of Puberty (Ages 11-16)	Being able to stay at a dorm in order to get education at a boarding school	...............
Period of Youth (Ages 17-21)	Being able to decide which university to attend, Being able to perform military duty	...............
Period of Young Adulthood (Ages 22-35)	Being able to establish his/her own business / find a job/ choose to be a soldier or a member of police, and finding a spouse	...............
Period of Middle Age (Ages 36-59)	..... ..... .....	He needs the support and means of the state for a proper homeland defense
Period of Old Age (Ages 60 and up)	..... ..... .....	He/she needs the support of his/her children.

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

You are very brave and you love your homeland. What do you want to do for your country if they provide you with the necessary means and positions? Can you fill the table given below by using your imagination?

In the Field of Military

In addition to our army for the defense of our country, I would set up a voluntary army.

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In the Field of Education

I would reorganize the existing education system. I would bring regulations that will enable teachers to work effectively.

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In the Field of Economics

I would provide opportunities to the companies that sell products to foreign countries in their commercial activities. I would develop policies that encourage people to purchase domestic products within the country.

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In the Field of Technology

I would organize a large team against possible cyber-attacks. I would make vast investments in the defense industry.



CHAPTER 17



BEING A
HARDWORKING
AND BEING A
PERSON WHO
PERSEVERES

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

"And when the prayer is ended, disperse freely on earth and seek to obtain [something] of Allah's bounty; but remember God often, so that you might attain to a happy state!" (al-Jum'a, 10)

"and that naught shall be accounted unto man but what he is striving for."
(al-Najm, 53: 39)

"Seek instead, by means of what Allah has granted you, [the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, your own [rightful] share in this world..."
(al-Qasas, 28: 77)

"Whereas unto those who attain to faith and do good works He will grant their reward in full: for Allah does not love evildoers." (Al Imran, 3: 57)

"O you who have attained faith! Be patient in adversity, and vie in patience with one another, and be ever ready [to do what is right], and remain conscious of Allah, so that you might attain a happy state!" (Al Imran, 3: 200)

"And spend of your substance in the cause of Allah, and make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction; but do good; for Allah loves those who do good." (al-Baqara, 2: 195)

"Therefore, when you are free (from thine immediate task), still labor hard,"
(al-Sharh, 94: 7)

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

Allah Almighty has created innumerable blessings on earth. In order to acquire our share from these bounties, Allah Almighty commands us to work.

If we work, we get its compensation. Therefore, we should work hard to get good results.

Our main objective is to gain Paradise in the Hereafter, but we have to work hard for our provisions in this world so that we would not be in need of anybody or anything.

Earning our provisions through permissible ways is a righteous deed. Therefore, we should try to earn our livelihood through permissible way as if we are performing an act of worship.

I should do everything that needs to be done to achieve success and be patient until I reach my goal. I should never give up.

No matter what I do, I have to do my best.

There should be no wasting of time. When I finish one job, I should start another one because I should be hardworking!



THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH)

MY PROPHET SAID

"Nobody has ever eaten a better meal than that which one has been earned by working with one's own hands. The Prophet David used to eat from the earnings of his own manual labor." (al-Bukhari, Buyu, 15)

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

What a nice thing to do to have job and to eat what we have rightfully earned! I hope I will have a profession whereby I can rightfully earn my livelihood! I am going to work hard and persevere.

When Aisha (r. anha) was asked about what the Prophet (pbuh) would do at home, she said, "Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would repair his shoes, patched his clothes, milk the sheep... In short, he did the same things that you do in your houses." (Ahmad, VI, 106-121)

Even though he (pbuh) was a prophet, he did everything necessary related to housework and never wasted his time. I will too be a hardworking person not only at school, but also at home.

"O Allah! I seek refuge with you (Allah) from (worries) care and grief, from incapacity and laziness, from miserliness and cowardice, from being heavily in debt and from being overpowered by other men." (al-Bukhari, Da'awat, 38)

Laziness is a bad characteristic from which we need to seek refuge in Allah. From now on, there is no sitting idly in my life! As our Prophet (pbuh) says, "One whose two days are equal is in loss."

A giving hand is better than the receiving hand (Muslim, Zakat, 97)

I will work hard and earn much to give to those in need. That is better!

Allah Almighty becomes pleased from the fact that you do your work properly. (al-Bayhaqi, Shu'ab al-Iman, 4/334)

No matter what work I do, if I do it properly, my Lord Almighty will be pleased.



A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

WORKING IS AN ACT WORSHIP WHICH GIVES PEACE AND TRANQUILITY

Even if thoughts such as “I wish my school were over, then I would feel very comfortable!”, “I wish I had finished the book I am reading!”, “I wish I had finished my homework!” and “I wish I had finished helping my parents” occupy our minds, the real thing that gives us happiness is to be able to produce something, is that not true? Or let us say: Although we want to complete the work we have started as soon as possible, in fact, what gives us peace of mind is doing the job itself.

Even though it seems nice to finish all the work we do as soon as possible and be free, after a while the emptiness turns into an anguish that bores people. This is because it is a good thing to work and produce something. For this reason, our beautiful religion emphasizes the importance of working and being patient, or being persistent while working, until we reach our goal.

Human beings have a tendency to sometimes to fall into boredom and leave the task they are working on before completing it. Whereas, it is vital to be patient in order to achieve any result. To continue the task whatever the obstacle is known as perseverance. When we look at the lives of ineffective people around us, we see that most of them leave the job that they began unfinished. For example, those who fail in their classes or fail to do well in any sport that they are engaged in, and those who cannot advance in any profession are generally individuals who think “I cannot make it” and therefore abandon all hope of succeeding. Perseverance in any task or work means to patiently look for ways to complete it.

Our duties and responsibilities towards ourselves and towards our family and society are all based on working. Our mothers always work to do household tasks and our fathers



always work to earn money and provide family sustenance. Children are also aware that they have to work as a student and help parents in the household chores. Every professional in the community, from the president to a farmer, is aware of his/her responsibilities and perseveres in achieving the results and success in their work. This is because most of the time success comes only as a result of long and strenuous labor. Perseverance of the human being in his work and trying to reach his goals is a behavior praised by our religion. Doing the opposite, in other words, doing nothing is not tolerated in our religion because it may lead people towards bad behaviors such as laziness, lying, theft, begging and consequently to bad results such as illness, failure and unhappiness.



Imagine a father who does not want to earn the livelihood of his family. Imagine a mother who does not want to do the work that is necessary for the health of the family, such as keeping the house clean and cooking. Ponder the condition of students who do not study in their classes, street cleaning personnel who do not clean the streets, farmers who do not plant their fields, and other professionals who do not fulfill their responsibilities. Imagine the immense problems they would cause in society.

When we look at the nation states that have grown and developed as a country, we see that their citizens are very hard working people. The reason for the major development of countries such as France, Germany and Japan in a very short time after the Second World War was that their administrators produced prudent projects, as well as that their people were hardworking and persevering. And yet, despite years of colonialism, the reason why some countries still have not shown development to a certain extent is their failed administrators and the hopelessness and laziness of their people.

Although it seems like a good thing to human beings to do nothing and have continually free time, the most important thing that will lead them to true peace in this world is to be hardworking and perseverant. Moreover, because this feature is a behavior praised by our religion, it will also help us to gain the spiritual rewards of performing acts of worship. Successful individuals and communities are those who are hardworking and persistent.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"

MY BELOVED PROPHET IS MY BEST IDEAL OF HOW TO BE HARDWORKING AND KEEP PERSEVERANCE

A STRAW MAT AND A PITCHER

Our Prophet (pbuh) was a very generous man. When he was asked to give something, he would never return a person empty handed. However, one day a man from among the Ansar came to the Prophet (pbuh) and begged from him.

Allah's Messenger said, "Do you have anything in your house?"

He said, "Yes, I have a straw mat, part of which we cover ourselves with and part we spread beneath us, and a pitcher from which we drink water."

He said, "Bring them to me."

So the man went home and brought the straw mat and the pitcher to the Prophet.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) took them in his hand and said, "Is there anybody who will buy these two things?"

A man said, "I will buy them for one dirham."

The Prophet said two or three times, "Is there anybody who will offer me more than a dirham?"

A man said, "I will buy them for two dirhams."

So he gave the items to him and took the two dirham which he gave to the Ansari and said,

"Buy food with one of them and give it to your family, and buy an axe with the other and bring it to me."

So the man did that, and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) took it and fixed a handle to it, and said,

"Go, gather and sell firewood, and come back to me in fifteen days."

So he went and gathered firewood and sold it, then he came back fifteen days later, and he had earned ten dirhams.

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "This is better for you than coming to me with the taint of begging on your face on the Day of Resurrection." (Ibn Maja, Tijarat, 282)

What would have happened if our Prophet (pbuh) had felt sorry for the man and given him charity?

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What would have happened if the man had trivialized the one dirham and spent it pointlessly?

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How may a person feel when he earns ten dirhams by spending one dirham he has, and consequently not needing anybody's help?

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THE PROPHET WHO CARRIES MUD-BRICKS

After the emigration of Muslims in Mecca, the Prophet (pbuh) also immigrated to Medina. The Prophet (pbuh), together with his Companions, decided to build a mosque where Muslims would come together, perform their prayers, learn their religion and arrange all kinds of meetings. And soon, they began the construction of the mosque.

The Prophet (pbuh) was both planning and managing the work. Moreover, along with his Companions, he carried the stones to the foundation of the mosque and he moved the mud-bricks for the walls.

His companions who saw this scene said, "O Messenger of Allah! You sit and rest, we can carry it.

Instead of abandoning the task, he worked even more enthusiastically, while everyone carried a single brick, he carried two at once and said:

"O Allah! There is no life except the life of the Hereafter. Help the Ansar and the Muhajirun."

The Companions who heard this started to work with even more enthusiasm. And the construction of the mosque was completed within a short time." (al-Nasai, Masajid, 12)



Even though he was a prophet, why did the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) work so hard?

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What would be different if the Prophet (pbuh) had let his Companions to carry the bricks themselves and he had just administered the tasks?

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RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
When I have so much homework to do	I would begin to lose my hope and I would think that I will not be able to complete it,	However, I would take short breaks and work hard until I finish all my homework.
In the morning when I am about to leave the house, my bed and pajamas would usually be left untidy,	I find it difficult to fold my clothes and tidy my bed, but	I should do my own chores and quickly clean and tidy up my own mess.
When I finish my homework, I have free time,	However, sitting idly bores me	...............
During my vacations, I have the opportunity to do various things,	..... ..... .....	I engage in various activities such as crafts, housework, sports etc.
.....	I would think that it is not a nice scene	And I would immediately gather up the untidy and disorderly things
.....	First I would think that I will not be able to succeed	But then I would look for ways to succeed and, step by step, achieve the result
If I postpone my homework and tasks to the last moment,	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

SHOW ME THE DIRECTION TO THE MARKET!

In the early years of Islam, when Muslims left their homes, land and businesses in Mecca and immigrated to Medina upon the command of Allah, they fell into poverty. Upon seeing this situation, our Prophet (pbuh) declared a brotherhood between the Meccan Muhajirs and the Medinan Ansars. In this unparalleled brotherhood in our world, the Ansar began to share whatever they possessed with their Muhajir brothers.

Our Prophet (pbuh) established a brotherhood between Abdurrahman b. Awf and Sa'd b. Rabi.

Sa'd told Abdurrahman, "O Brother! I am one of the richest of Medina. Here is my house, my property, my wealth! I want to share half of this with you."

Abdurrahman said, "O Sa'd! I do not like to be a burden. May Allah bless your property."

But Sa'd insisted on giving half of his wealth, "No, brother! The Messenger of Allah has declared us as brothers, does a brother ever leave his brother in trouble?"

But Abdurrahman was determined not to accept Sa'd's offer.

He said: "Show me the way to the bazaar."

Sa'd asked, "What are you going to do in the bazaar?"

Abdurrahman said, "I have some money. I will buy and sell goods with it."

Upon this, Sa'd showed him the way to the bazaar.

Abdurrahman traded in the bazaar that day and his small amount of money brought a certain amount of blessings. He returned home with some cheese and oil. He felt the peace of having earned his wealth through his own effort. After a while, he became one of the richest men of Medina. (al-Bukhari, Manaqib al-Ansar, 8)

What would have happened if Abdurrahman had accepted Sa'd offer thinking that "he was a rich man"?

Do you think that he got overly tired when buying and selling goods in the market? What kind of feelings and thoughts may this have evoked in him?

CALLOUSED HANDS

One day our Prophet (pbuh) was walking through the streets of the city. He saw Sa'd b. Mu'adh and shook hands with him saying,

"As-salamu alaykum O Sa'd!"

Sa'd gave salutations back to the Messenger of Allah by saying,

"Wa alaykum as-salam O the Prophet of Allah!"

Looking at the calloused hands holding in his palm, the Prophet (pbuh) said,

"What happened to your hands Sa'd? They are much calloused."

He said, "That is because I work for my family."

Then the Prophet said with a warm smile on his face, "Here are the hands that Allah loves!" (al-Sarakhsi, 30, p. 245)

Do you think, Sa'd felt embarrassed when Allah's Messenger (pbuh) held his calloused hands? Why?

Why are the hands calloused from working the hands loved by Allah?

TEST YOURSELF

HOW HARDWORKING ARE YOU?

1. **You have homework from last week that you have to deliver tomorrow. But another teacher gave you another assignment. It does not seem that you will be able to finish it in time. What would you do?**
 - a) I would tell my teacher that "I was ill, and therefore I was unable to finish it."
 - b) I would do a little bit of both of the assignments and then submit them both.
 - c) I would decide not to go to school for a while and then the teacher would forget that she gave me any homework.
 - d) I would never linger, I would start my homework as soon as I got home and would not go to sleep until I finish it all.
2. **When you went to school, you learned that your teacher had taken a leave of absence and could not come to class. What would you do?**
 - a) I would begin to chat with my friends.
 - b) I always have a book to read with me so I would take it out and begin reading.
 - c) I would repeat some old lessons from my notebook.
 - d) I would do whatever my friends say.
3. **For the profession that you intend to do you have to work hard to enter the high school you need to attend, what would you do?**
 - a) I will give up and find another profession. I am not going to starve anyway!
 - b) I would do my best, and if it does not work, I will choose another profession.
 - c) I will do what my parents say.
 - d) There should be ways to get into that profession without much work, I will look for such a way.
4. **You sat down to do your homework. Then your friend came and said, "Shall we play a little? What would you do?"**
 - a) I would go out and play, I do not want to hurt his feelings.
 - b) I would tell him that "I will do some homework and then I will come."
 - c) I would ask my mother. I will do what she says.
 - d) If the teacher has given me homework, I would not play until I have completed it.
5. **What else do you do besides studying at your classes?**
 - a) Nothing! My only responsibility is to study.
 - b) Personal things such as tidying my bed, taking a bath, and cutting my nails.
 - c) I help my parents and siblings. I can even help some of my neighbors when necessary.
 - d) I am involved in sports.
6. **What would you do if you have difficulty doing your homework or any other work?**
 - a) I would leave it, why should I force myself?
 - b) I would get help. I would try until I finish.
 - c) I will do as much as I can and leave the rest.
 - d) I would sit down and cry.



EMPATHY

WHEN EVERYTHING COMES ONE AFTER ANOTHER...

It is almost the end of the semester and vacation time. But you have so much work to do! Exam dates are all coming in a succession... You have homework to complete and to submit to the teacher. When you think about how to deal with all of this, you get unexpected news. Your mother is in an emergency surgery! "Oh no!" you say, "What could it be?"

You immediately run to the hospital. You find your father waiting at the door. Your father, who left his job to come to the hospital, looks at you with tired eyes and adds,

"She had appendicostomy, it is not a big deal; but she has to stay in the hospital for a while."

You have two siblings at home. You do not have very close relatives nearby who can come and help you. Your father has to work since there are many bills that need to be paid.

Then, your school comes to your mind. You are at a time when you are busy with exams and homework because it is the end of the school year. But this is the time your mother and siblings need you. What are you going to do?



INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



1. Do you know how to swim? How many minutes can you swim without a break?
.....
.....
2. Which part of swimming do you think does the person in the photo finds most difficult to learn?
.....
.....
3. How could this person who is a swimming champion overcome the difficulties?
.....
.....
4. Do you have goals that you have difficulty in achieving?
.....
.....
5. How can you achieve them?
.....
.....
6. Have there been times when the man in the photo may have said, "It is no longer possible! This will not happen!"?
.....
.....
7. What do you think is the only secret behind this man's success?
.....
.....
8. What are the things that this man has and that you want to have?
.....
.....
9. What are the advantages that this man does not have, but you have?
.....
.....
10. Say a succinct statement (a slogan) about overcoming difficulties and achieving success.
.....
.....

STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

LIKE A BUTTERFLY

One day, a small hole appeared in the cocoon. A man sat down and watched as the butterfly-worm was trying to pull its body out of this small hole for hours. Then it seemed to him that it had stopped trying to get out of the cocoon. It was as if it had done everything it could and had nothing left to do.

So the man decided to help the butterfly. He grabbed a small pair of scissors and began to enlarge the hole in the cocoon. Then the butterfly came out easily. But his tiny wings were still dry and wrinkled. The man kept watching. Because he hoped that at any moment the butterfly's wings would open and widen and be strong enough to carry its body.

The man was well-intentioned and caring. He believed he had helped the butterfly save itself from the narrow cocoon. But none of this happened. The butterfly spent the rest of his life crawling on the ground with a dried body and wrinkled wings. No matter how hard it tried, it never flew.

Whereas Allah had a plan. He wanted the butterfly to try to get out of a narrow hole. Thus, the fluid in the butterfly's body would reach its wings and thus its wings would be strong enough to fly.

This is also true for our lives. Sometimes we think we are trying in vain. We see that we cannot cover the distance. But if Allah allowed us to move forward without any effort in life, then in a sense we would perhaps be disabled. Just like the butterfly, we would never get strong enough and fly.

THE ONE-ARMED KARATE CHAMPION

The biggest dream of one child in Japan was to be successful in karate. However, his family did not allow him to learn karate. Then, when he was 10 years old, he had an unfortunate traffic accident and he lost his left arm. Through this accident, the dream of the child, who had just lost his left arm, was completely ruined.

As time passed, his father, who observed that his child had become completely depressed and lost his morale, hired a famous karate instructor in Japan to raise his child's morale. In his first lesson, the instructor showed the child the movement of tossing an opponent with his right arm. They practiced the same move in all the second, third, and subsequent classes. The child got bored of working on the same move and said to his teacher,

"Sir, I am very bored and I think we should move on to other moves!"

His teacher refused and said that he would continue to practice this move until he becomes the fastest person in the world to do that move.

The boy had become so fast that he managed to beat even his teacher during training and was able to toss him on the ground one time after another. One day his teacher came with a piece of paper that said that the child could participate in the youth karate championship. The child was very surprised, but also very happy.

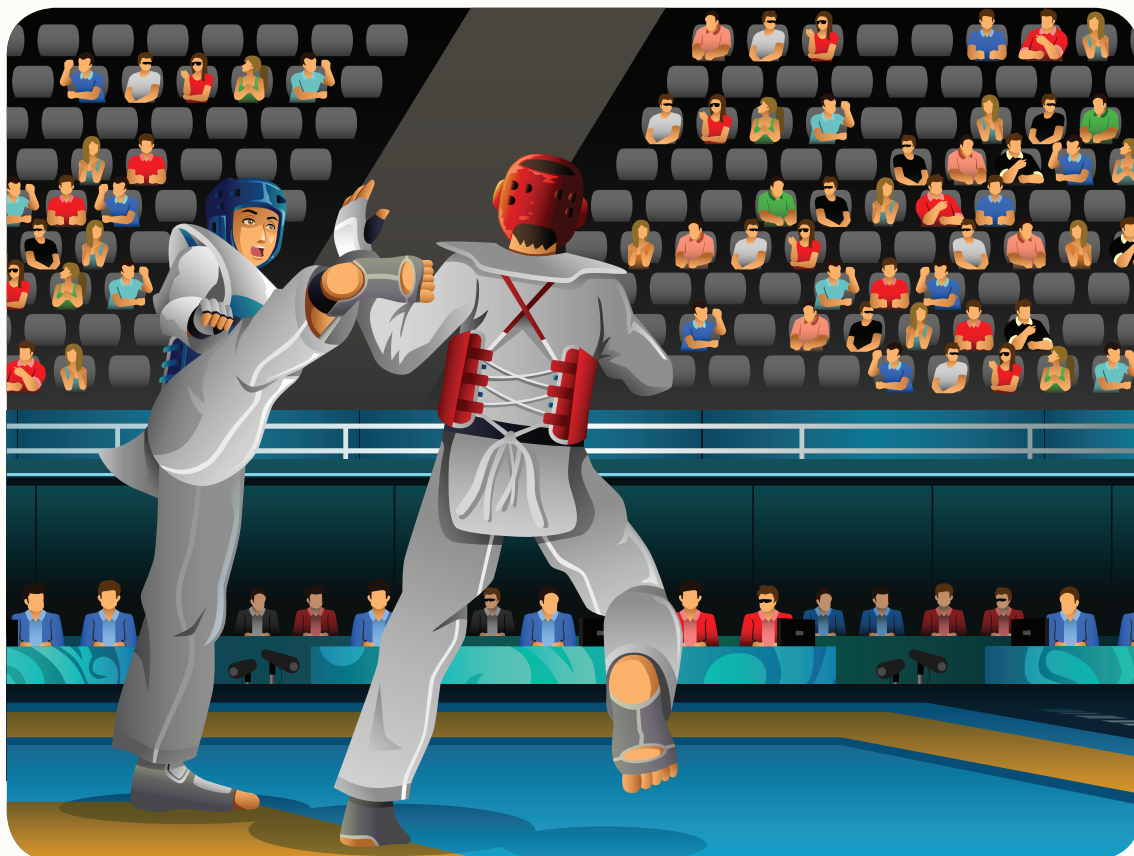
The next day, when he was going to stand in front of his first opponent in the stadium, he asked his teacher,

“How will this work? I only know one move.”

His teacher replied, “Just believe that you will succeed and make your move.”

The boy entered the competition and eliminated his opponent with one move. He even managed to reach the finals with that one move. In the final, he had an opponent twice the size of the boy. First the boy got very scared, but he had complete faith in that he would succeed. By making the only move he knew, he managed to defeat his last opponent and became the Karate champion. With great happiness and excitement, he ran to his teacher and asked, “Teacher, I do not understand how? I know only one move, I have only got one arm and I still became the champion.”

His teacher looked at him and said, “The move you can make is one of the most difficult moves in karate, and there is only one way to defend against it, which is to hold onto the opponent's left arm.”



CLASS ACTIVITY

IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE HARDWORKING AND PERSEVERANT UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES?

The class is divided into two groups. Each group is given as found below the following two propositions. Each group must give its own examples and the other group must try to refute them. One person must also fill in the below the table on the board.

The first group argues the following proposition:

“Being hardworking and perseverant is necessary under all circumstances”

Example: 1

Someone with a very rich father should also be very hardworking and perseverant.

Example: 2

Even if its resources have been exploited and depleted for years, a country should work harder.

Example: 3

.....
.....
.....
.....

Example: 4

.....
.....
.....
.....

The second group argues the following proposition:

“Being hardworking and perseverant is meaningless under some circumstances”

Example: 1

One who has not had a high success at school so far cannot pass the exam to enter a good university, even if he works hard and persists.

Example: 2

If a doctor tells a patient that he has only two to three years left to live ..., After that, the patient does not have to work and struggle for anything.

Example: 3

.....
.....
.....
.....

Example: 4

.....
.....
.....
.....

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DO THE HARDWORKING AND PERSEVERANT INDIVIDUALS HAVE?	WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DO THE HARDWORKING AND PERSEVERANT SOCIETIES HAVE?
They use their time carefully.	They start a program with a specified starting time exactly at that stated time.
If they lose their morale and motivation,	The civil servants do their government jobs well just as they do their personal jobs.
Their study desks / work spaces	Their streets
When they face obstacles,	They the necessities of the modern age.
When they need help from others	They natural resources
.....
.....
.....

CHAPTER 18



RESPECT AND LOVE FOR THE TEACHER

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"...From among His servants, it is only those who know that fear Allah..."
(Fatir, 35: 28)

The real knowledge is to know Allah. That is to say, those who have true knowledge know Allah very well and truly love him with deep love and respect.

"...And when you are told to rise up, rise up Allah will rise up, to (suitable) ranks (and degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted knowledge..."
(al-Mujadila, 58: 11)

As Allah increases the rank and value of His knowledgeable servants in this world, He increases their honor in the Hereafter. Thus, our Lord wants us to appreciate the value of our knowledgeable teachers.

"...Can they who know and they who do not know be deemed equal?..."
(al-Zumar, 39: 9)

Our Lord draws our attention to the value of our teachers who are much more knowledgeable and virtuous than us, and I should not fault them in the arena of respect!

"And so We propound these parables unto man: but none can grasp their innermost meaning save those who have knowledge"
(al-Ankabut, 29: 43)

Those who understand the examples given in the Qur'an in real terms are the scholars who have knowledge. Therefore, in order to understand the Qur'an correctly, we should listen to our teachers who have knowledge.



THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET

MY PROPHET SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"The scholars are the heirs of the prophets" (al-Tirmidhi, 'Ilm, 19)

In a way, scholars should be very valuable because they are the ones who will continue the mission of the prophets. My teachers are truly valuable people!

The Companions of the Messenger of Allah described their peace and tranquility in their meetings with the Prophet as follows: "We listened to the Prophet's talks so attentively as if we had a bird sitting on our heads and it was going to fly away if we moved." (Abu Dawud, Sunnah, 23-24)

I will listen with respect and decency to my teachers who follow the path of the prophets.

"He is not one of us who does not have mercy on our young and does not respect our elders." (al-Tirmidhi, Birr, 15)

As a true Muslim, I will properly honor my teachers, who are both older and knowledgeable than us.

"The best of you is the one teaches and learns the Qur'an." (al-Bukhari, Fadail al-Qur'an, 21)

I want to be one of the best believers. I will now learn the Qur'an, and then I will teach it.

"A single learned Muslim is harder on the Devil than a thousand worshippers." (al-Tirmidhi, V/48)

Whoever defeats his enemy is the one whom I really should take as an example. I appreciate the value of my teachers.



A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

THE MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE WE HAVE: OUR TEACHERS

Dear friends!

All of us have very esteemed teachers who teach us all kinds of sciences, especially Islamic studies. Of course, they also had their valuable teachers in the past! When we look back into history, our teachers had their teachers, their teachers had their teachers and their teachers had their teachers too, didn't they? When we move this chain forward towards the future, it will become possible to see the same thing. Our teachers will educate us, we will educate others and our students will educate others and so on.

While the teachings of our beloved teachers about the worldly life beautify our world and make our lives easier, their teachings about the hereafter are even more valuable knowledge, which will provide us with eternal peace. That is because our religion has commanded us to show the proper importance and respect to our teachers, and to love them greatly.

For example, when your teachers come into the class, you stand up, don't you? When you meet them in any place, you check your posture and clothes, and respectfully greet them. You take notice of their counsels. While they teach you something, you listen to them with all ears, and even if you get bored, you do not huff and puff. You pay attention to the questions that you need to ask, and you do not waste their valuable time with unnecessary questions. You try to follow their advice and their recommended books, authors, etc. and try to read these as much as possible. You know that they give years to achieve so much knowledge and you try to properly benefit from them.



Do you know that your teachers constantly read and learn new things in order that you may learn better? These people merit the best of reverence and love, don't they? Not only because of the knowledge they convey, they are also worthy of respect as being exemplary people who utilize this knowledge within their own personalities. In general, their character is also very good. Being with them evokes a desire to have a good morality and this keeps the excitement and desire of being alive. Therefore, even if the schools that we attend end, we should always have teachers by whose feet we sit. Scholars, who carry out the commands of Allah, obey the prohibitions of Allah, and who testify to His existence and unity, are the most precious people that we can have in this world. May Allah make us abide with such righteous scholars throughout our lives, and bless us with the opportunity to show them proper respect and love.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM “THE BEST ONE”

MY BELOVED PROPHET, MY BEST EXEMPLAR IN SHOWING RESPECT AND LOVE TO THE TEACHERS

IS IT A QUR’ANIC CIRCLE OR A SCHOLARLY CIRCLE?

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came out of one of his apartments one day, and entered the mosque, where he saw two circles, one reciting the Holy Qur’an and supplicating to Allah, and the other where learning and teaching was taking place.

The Prophet said: “Both of them are good.” he then continued,

“These people are reciting the Qur’an and supplicating to Allah, and if He wills He will give them, and if He wills He will withhold from them. And these people are learning and teaching. Verily I have been sent as a teacher.”

Then he sat down with the one who were busy with pursuing knowledge. (Ibn Maja, Muqaddima, 17)

What circle would you like to join if you were there on that day? Why?

.....

.....

What may be the reason that the Messenger of Allah chose to sit among the seekers of knowledge?

.....

.....

APPOINTING A YOUNG CHILD AS AN AMIR

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was going to send a delegation to Yemen. He appointed the youngest of them as the Amir (leader) over them. The group waited for a few days and could not set out on the journey. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) encountered one of them on the road and said,

“O so and so! What happened to you, haven’t you gone to Yemen?”

The man said, “O Messenger of Allah, we could not go because our Amir’s foot was hurt.”

Our Prophet (pbuh) came to the Amir, blew on his foot seven times, and said “In the name of Allah, with Allah, I seek refuge in Allah. I seek refuge in the power of Allah from the evil of what is here.” The Amir’s foot healed.

One of the elders asked curiously, “O Messenger of Allah! He is our youngest. Are you appointing him as an Amir over us?”

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, "But amongst you, he is the one who knows the Qur'an the best."

The old man said, "O Messenger of Allah! If I had not been afraid of falling asleep and disrespecting the Qur'an, and not being able to act with its commands after memorizing the Qur'an, I would have also learned it.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

"Learn the Qur'an. Because the Qur'an is like a water-skin filled with musk whose mouth is tied. If you open the water-skin, a nice smell of musk will emanate from it. If you keep its mouth tied up, it will stay where you put it and preserve its scent. Such is the Qur'an. You can take advantage of it when you read and practice the Qur'an. If it only stays in your memory you will not be able to take advantage of it properly." (al-Haythami, VII, 161)



What were the reasons that the Prophet appointed a young man as a leader for the elderly?

What superior qualities do people gain by memorizing the Qur'an and living in accordance with its meaning?

RECOGNIZE ➡ FEEL ➡ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
When the teacher of a course which you do not like very much gives homework	I get bored and I do not want to do it	However, I think that it will surely benefit me, and therefore do my best to complete it.
When my teacher says something that clashes with my thoughts	I feel like objecting and defending my views	But it is better that I express my thoughts after my teacher finishes his class.
If my classmates start to make noise when my teacher is delivering his lecture	..... ..... .....	I try to listen to his lecture by looking at his face and be an example for my friends.
If I have an opportunity to have a conversation with my teacher	I think that this is an invaluable opportunity for me	...............
.....	I feel happy and excited	I greet him and inquire about his health and wellbeing.
When I remember my teacher during the holidays and at important dates	...............	...............
.....	With the feeling of loyalty, gratitude, and respect	...............

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

THE GREATNESS OF THE TEACHER

In 1453, a very important event for Islamic history and world history took place. Sultan Mehmet II, the young sultan of the Ottoman Empire, conquered Istanbul. Sultan Mehmet II, who knew six languages and had a lot of knowledge, gave great importance to science and the scholars during his sultanate. He invited important scientists from all over the world to Istanbul and made the city a center of science.

Once, Prince Mehmet, who was destined to be the conqueror of Istanbul in the near future, had an unpleasant encounter with his teacher Molla Gurani when he was a young boy. The prince who was very intelligent; but also a very active child misbehaved in class. At that point his teacher pulled his ear and disturbed by this act, Fatih angrily said,

"I am the son of the sultan! How dare you pull my ears?" When he went home in the evening, he told his father and said,

"Father, let us go together to the school tomorrow and teach my teacher a lesson! Let him learn what it means to pull the ear of the sultan's son!"

His father said, "Okay, son, we will go to the school tomorrow." In the morning, the father and the son went to the school together. Young Mehmet was very happy. But his father had already prepared a plan with his teacher.

When Mehmet and his father arrived at the school, they saw their teacher Molla Gurani waiting at the door with a stick. Young Mehmet was shocked. As soon as they entered, his teacher chased them both with a stick. They ran and the teacher chased them. Then his father turned to his son and said,

"Look, son, I am the Sultan, and you are a son of a Sultan. But your teacher is greater than both you and me. He almost caught us and beat us both. You better go to your teacher, apologize, and kiss his hand. From now on never disobey him and respectfully listen to him."

After that day, the young prince Mehmet sat at the feet of his teacher and later he adopted as teachers the great scholars before whom he could sit. The secret of the genius and success of Sultan Mehmet Khan, the Conqueror, who conquered Istanbul at the age of twenty-one and in front of whom the world sultans bowed, was perhaps this understanding that he acquired during his childhood that the teacher is always superior to the Sultan.

What would have happened if Prince Mehmet had not learned, when he was a child, the fact of how much respect and obedience a teacher deserves?

.....

.....

What do you think would have happened if the Sultan had taken the side of his son and warned his teacher?

.....

.....

THE REASON WHY THE MAN COVERED 1320 KM-ROAD

Even though Abu al-Darda (r.a.), one of the prominent Companions, was one of the last ones who converted to Islam, he became one of the distinguished scholars due to his fondness of learning. He attained our Prophet's (pbuh) praise.

He was the first one to be appointed to the position of judge in the armed forces of the Muslims. He worked as a Judge in Medina during the caliphate of Umar (r.a.). He then went to Damascus, where he worked as a teacher of Qur'an and Islamic law, and trained numerous students. When he was teaching Islam in Damascus, someone from Medina came to him.

Abu al-Darda (r.a.) asked him inquiringly, "O Brother! What caused you to come here?"

The man who came from Medina replied saying, "I have come to you from the city of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) for a tradition that I have heard you related from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). I have come for no other purpose, but to listen to that tradition from you."

Abu al-Darda said, "You did not come for anything else?"

The man said, "No."

Abu al-Darda said, "Did you not even come for trade?"

The man said, "No, I did not come except seeking this saying of the Prophet."

So Abu al-Darda said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) say:

"If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, and the inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth, and the fish in the deep waters will ask for forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon over the rest of the stars during the night when it is full. The learned are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion." (al-Tirmidhi, 'Ilm, 19/2682; Abu Dawud, 'Ilm, 1/3641)

What do you think made Abu al-Darda a distinguished scholar in such a short time?

.....

Do you think the person who came from Medina by covering 1320 km road has achieved his purpose? Why?

.....

How does the difference between your access to knowledge today and a person's access to knowledge in those days affect the value of knowledge?

.....

TEST YOURSELF

HOW MUCH IS YOUR RESPECT AND LOVE TO YOUR TEACHERS?

1. **You were sitting with your friends, and you saw the teacher walk through the door. What would you do?**
 - a) I would stand up and give him my seat.
 - b) I would greet him lightly with my head from where I sit.
 - c) If there is no place to sit, I would give him my seat.
 - d) Why should I stand? I would just ignore him!
2. **Your teacher looks very angry today, he gets angry very quickly. What would you do?**
 - a) I would immediately complain to the principal.
 - b) I would ask why he is so angry. I would yell at him that we do not deserve it.
 - c) I would keep my silence. I would talk to him after he calms down.
 - d) I would slam the door and leave, he has no right to shout at us!
3. **You have got a friend in your classroom who always argue with your teacher. What would you do?**
 - a) I would try to explain to my friend that this is erroneous behavior.
 - b) This is my friend's problem. It is none of my business.
 - c) It is fun to find the teacher's mistakes and I join to my friend in his arguments with the teacher.
 - d) I would explain the matter to the principal and the vice principal.
4. **When your teacher speaks, you always think of saying something in contrary. What would you do?**
 - a) I have to say immediately what I think, I cannot keep it to myself.
 - b) I wait patiently until he finishes his words, then I take permission to speak.
 - c) I can never express my opinion.
 - d) I will tell my friend what I have to say.
5. **Your teacher entered the classroom, sat at his desk. But he realized that he had left some of his books in the teachers' room. You saw this, what would you do?**
 - a) I would say that I can bring the books, I would run and bring them.
 - b) If he asks me to do so, I will.
 - c) I pretend to look for something in my bag so that he does not ask me to bring his books.
 - d) I pay him no attention. I pretend like I did not understand.
6. **You are so ill and tired that you cannot raise your head. Your teacher comes into the classroom. What would you do?**
 - a) Probably he will understand me. I will put my head down on the desk and fall asleep.
 - b) I will not go to class. I instead will go to the mosque or somewhere in order to sleep.
 - c) I wait at the door for my teacher and explain my situation. I will do what he says.
 - d) I wait at the door for my teacher and ask permission to not attend the class.

EMPATHY

YEARS LATER WHEN YOU SEE ONE OF YOUR TEACHERS...

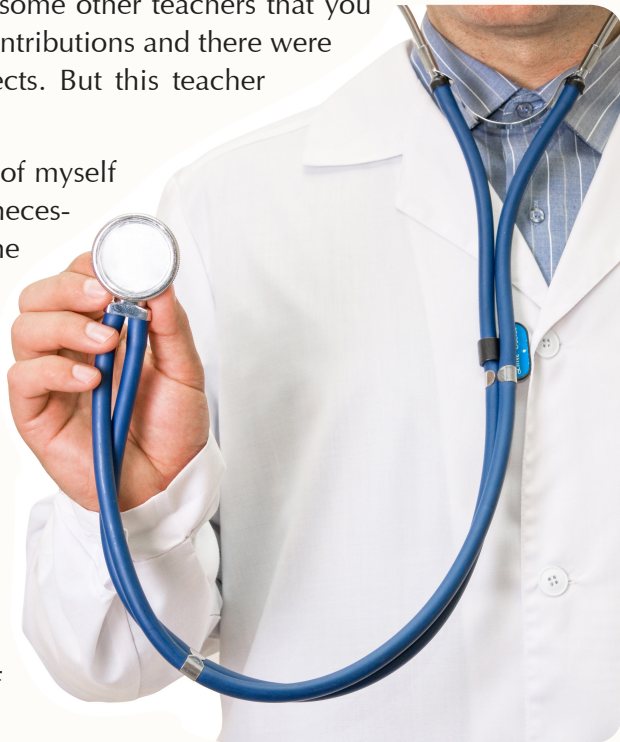
The years pass so quickly. You have become an adult. After primary school, middle school, high school, and university, you have already become a doctor. In the hospital where you work, you meet dozens of patients every day; baby, child, young, adult, old... They all have different kinds of troubles, you do your duty and help them to get healthy.

One day you are with a somewhat old patient. After examination, diagnosis, medicine and in-patient treatment, you sense that there is something familiar with this patient. You think he is one of your middle school teachers. You feel certain when you look into his name. Yes, yes, he was a math teacher for a while at your school, but he does not remember you. You were a child back then. Who knows how many students he had and how would he remember a single student? Moreover, he was not one of your favorite teachers; he was just a regular teacher. You had some other teachers that you would never forget with their positive contributions and there were some others with certain negative aspects. But this teacher had been very average one.

You thought, "Should I remind him of myself now?" but you said "Let it go! It is unnecessary! I will do my job, like I do with the others!" Then you thought, "But maybe he will like it when I tell him that one of his students has become a doctor. Besides, I can make him happier by showing him more interest. After all, he has more or less contributed to my development!"

But these days your work is so busy that you have no wish to pay special attention to anyone. You think to yourself, "What does it matter if I introduce myself so long as I do my work properly?"

Then suddenly a thought appears in your mind, "what kind of treatment can I expect when I become an elderly person?" What are you going to do now? Why?



INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



The teacher of the year educates benevolent students.

- Where and when could this photo have been taken?
.....
.....
- What may the students whose souvenir photos are taken with their teacher be thinking?
.....
.....
- What will the students remember and say in the future about their teachers who teach them to do good and love good? Why?
.....
.....
- What kind of emotions does the teacher who is pleased with the success of his students feel right now?
.....
.....
- What could be the greatest gift that the students could give to the teacher in the photo? Why?
.....
.....
- What makes the teacher happiest in this scene? Why?
.....
.....
- What would do the students in the photo do if they saw their teacher in a hospital? Why?
.....
.....
- When do you think the students in the photo would remember their teachers after graduation? Why? Would they visit him?
.....
.....
- Do you think this teacher prays to Allah for his students? How does he pray?
.....
.....
- Do you think these students pray to Allah for their teachers? How do they pray?
.....
.....

STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

DIFFICULT TEST

Ayşe was in the fourth grade. It was time for her first exams. It was a bit difficult for her, because during the first three years they had only engaged in reading and writing, and four basic operations. Now there was a social studies course. While studying for this course she felt that she had a hard time because her memory was not very good.

For the exam tomorrow, the articles about the duties of the Mukhtar, the duties of the district governor, and the mayor's duties were in front of her and she had to memorize them. She tried again and again, but she could not do it. She was confusing and mixing up all the information. She studied and revised the book in front of her until the exam started. When the teacher entered the class, she closed the book and left it under the desk. She thought "I have probably memorized it." But a voice inside her said "No, you could not memorize it."

The teacher handed out the exam papers. She took a look at the questions and said, "Oh no" the teacher had asked about the duties of the governor and the mayor. If she could not answer these two questions, she would get a very low grade, which she had never received before. She was very excited and anxious. She tried to encourage herself by saying I can do it. She answered the other questions and it was the turn of these questions. She began to write... she was able to respond to two points, but the rest was not coming. She said, "How is it that I cannot answer them and me who have never got a low grade!



Then she remembered that her book was under the desk. Yes, yes, maybe she could gently open and write the answer without letting her teacher knowing. She tried... The teacher did not see, she continued to write. She wrote it all. She had succeeded. The test was over, she handed over her paper. But then she did not feel comfortable at all; but it had already happened. What would happen if the teacher noticed when reading the papers and said something, what would she do? She said to herself, "never mind, nothing will happen".

A few days passed. The teacher came to class one day and said, "I read your exams, children, and your friend Ayşe got the highest grade; I congratulate her."

Ayşe's face turned red. She met the teacher's eyes for a moment. It was as if his looks were implying something. It was certain that the teacher had realized that she had cheated. At that moment, only Ayşe and her teacher knew the truth. But her teacher never offended her in front of the class. He did not embarrass her in front of her friends.

The topic never came up again, and stayed closed. Ayşe was grateful to her teacher for not embarrassing her. From her teacher's mature and insightful behavior, she learned such a lesson that she never cheated again during her lifetime. She never forgot her teacher.

CLASS ACTIVITY

IF I BECOME A TEACHER

The following table is written on the board and the students are asked to remember the good and offensive behavior of their former teachers along with the incident without giving a name. They are then made to think about what the exemplary behavior made them feel like, and how it can be improved further. They are also asked to think about what the teacher with offensive behavior made them feel like, and how such actions can be remedied.

Sample Incident	How did it make you feel and / or make you do	If you become a teacher, what would you do to further improve the deed?
I broke the glass window of the classroom. My teacher never yelled at me. He simply had the broken glass renewed with my pocket money.	I was surprised for he was not furious. But I also felt glad. I would try harder so that my friends and I would never harm any class property again.	When replacing the glass, I would give the student the work of finding and negotiating with the glassmaker.
Offensive Incident	How did it make you feel and / or make you do	If you become a teacher, what would you do to remedy it?
My friend hit another friend in the class. The teacher hit him even more and at the same time shouted, "Why did you hit him?"	I was enraged. The problem was not solved and we did not learn the right behavior. Moreover, the other child was hurt much more!	I would like the child who hit his friend to apologize. And I would give him a task like cleaning up the class room or tidying up the bookshelf.

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

My behaviors which demonstrate that I respect and love my teachers	The level of teacher's satisfaction			
	The love and respect between us got stronger (10 points)	He became happy and smiled at me. (15 points)	I have become a good example for everybody (20 points)	Everybody wanted to be close to me and become my friends (30 points)
I greeted him with love and respect when I saw him				
I listened to his lecture attentively				
In order to understand the subject better, I asked the questions on my mind in an appropriate and proper manner.				
I called / visited during holidays or when he got ill.				
The teacher seemed to need some help, so I immediately ran to his help.				
I prayed to Allah for him				
I try to be a good person just as he taught us				

CHAPTER 19



BEING SIDE BY
SIDE WITH OUR
BROTHERS IN
RELIGION DURING
BOTH SORROW
AND HAPPINESS

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another..."
(al-Tawba, 9: 71)

Then we should take care of our brothers and sisters in faith, share their pain and joy, and should not leave them by themselves!

"All believers are but brethren..."
(al-Hujurat, 49: 10)

I must be with my brother during both his joyful and painful times; at his wedding and at his funeral, just like my real blood brother.

"On those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, will (Allah) Most Gracious bestow love."
(Maryam, 96)

I believe when we beautify our deeds (towards each other) as believers, Allah will create love among us.

"Then will he be of those who believe, and enjoin patience, (constancy, and self-restraint), and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion. Such are the Companions of the Right Hand."
(al-Balad, 17-18)

We should develop sincere and warm relations with our Muslim brothers and sisters so that we can always recommend good, beautiful, patience and compassion to each other, and we can keep each other away from evil.

"Your (real) friends are (no less than) Allah, His Messenger, and the (fellowship of) believers, those who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship)."
(al-Maida, 5: 55)

I should select my friends from among those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, perform prayers, and give alms.

"The Unbelievers are protectors, one of another: Unless you do this, (protect each other), there would be tumult and oppression on earth, and great mischief." (al-Anfal, 8: 73)

We, as believers, should be close friends, so that goodness and beauty on earth will increase. Otherwise, if evil people become friends with each other, it will be chaos on earth.

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET (PBUH)

MY PROPHET SAID

“Verily. Allah would say on the Day of Resurrection: Where are those who have mutual love for My Glory’s sake? Today I shall shelter them in My shadow when there is no other shadow but the shadow of Mine.” (Muslim, Birr, 37)

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

How precious it is for us to love each other for the sake of Allah! Allah will protect us on the most difficult day i.e. the Day of Resurrection.

“The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, affection, and fellow-feeling is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever.” (Muslim, Birr, 66)

We should feel the pain of our Muslim brothers as our own. I will try to feel my brothers’ troubles in my heart. I will pray for them and make efforts to decrease the pain of my Muslim brothers and sisters and to increase their joy.

“The rights of a Muslim on the Muslims are five: 1. to respond to the salutation, 2. visiting the ill, 3. to follow the funeral processions, 4. to accept an invitation, and to reply to those who sneeze by saying “yarhamuka’llah (May Allah have mercy on you)”.” (al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 2)

People often need to share their pain and their happiness with their loved ones. I will be sensitive to my brothers in these matters.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) often asked his Companions: “Who amongst you followed a funeral procession today?” “Who amongst you patted the head of an orphan today?” “Who amongst you has today visited the ill today?” (Muslim, Fadail al-Sahaba, 12)

I have to take care of my Muslim brothers and spend time with them. In other words, I must share the joy and sorrow of my Muslim brothers and not leave them by themselves.

“If anyone of you is invited to a wedding banquet, he must go to it (accept the invitation).” (al-Bukhari, Nikah, 71)

When invited to his wedding, we must accept this invitation and share the joy of our brother.



A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

WE WERE NOT BORN ALONE, AND WE CANNOT LIVE ALONE!

When a human being is born, he finds himself in a family. Then comes his relatives, neighbors, school community, mosque community, and the human being always becomes happy when he feels the taste and excitement of being in a society. The family, relatives and friends remind people that they are not alone. They remind a person that he can share the excitement, sadness and peace of life with his relatives. The human being sees that the sorrows decrease as they are shared, just as joy increases as they are shared, and the delight becomes more beautiful due to this sharing. This unity gives people confidence and peace of mind and the human being always wants to be a member of his society and relatives.

For instance, when you go to the wedding of a relative, you feel joyful to have attended their joyful day, don't you? The married couple feel even happier when their relatives come to their wedding. Again, when a new sibling born is born, think about the pleasure you get from presenting the baby to your guests. By sharing our joy with our loved ones, our happiness will surely be doubled... Is that not right?

Does not either waiting for your guests, or going to visit others during the holidays, and visiting the elders and getting their prayers offer a certain tranquility and peace to your heart? It is always pleasurable to congratulate and pray for those who have bought a new house, a car, and for those who have achieved a milestone success in their lives. In other words, sharing happiness is one of our beautiful traditions that make us all cheerful and exultant.

Of course, in life good things do not always happen to a person. Sometimes you may suffer from a pain, which hurts you and which you obviously dislike. After a few days when you get ill and are unable to go to school you feel sad, but how glad you become and forget your pain when you see your friends coming to visit you.

Especially in the face of a very painful experiences such as death, a person always finds the strength to endure such pains with the support of those close to him, and he can only bear the pain with their support. It is very difficult for a person to endure such pain alone.

That is why our religion has encouraged people as social beings to share the pain and joy of their brothers and sisters. To visit the ill is regarded as a praiseworthy act and is recompensed with spiritual rewards, The same is true for attending a funeral, to attend invitations such as weddings and celebrations, to lovingly pat the head of the orphans, to feed them, to share their pains and to take care of them, and to pray to Allah to bestow goodness and health on the newborns. Our Lord Almighty gives us great spiritual rewards to relieve the troubles of any Muslim. In his life time, our Prophet (pbuh) showed us the beauty of sharing the sorrows and joys through the best instances. For example, he went to visit a child in order to comfort him because his bird had died; he attended the funeral of a child to comfort the parents of the deceased; and he always visited the orphans when they fell ill.

A Muslim cannot be a selfish person who only cares about himself. Our Lord Almighty wants us to be altruistic people who care about their Muslim brothers and sisters, share their happiness and sorrows. This is because this world becomes a better place when we share our pain and joy.

Beautiful hearted Muslims who love to make others happy and who are happy when others are happy and who share the suffering of others will be people who are loved and rejoiced both in this world and the Hereafter.

THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM “THE BEST ONE”

MY BELOVED PROPHET, MY BEST EXEMPLAR IN SHARING THE JOY AND SORROW OF HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS

THE CHILD WHOSE BIRD DIED

Zayd was a young boy about 3-5 years old. He had a little bird that he loved very much, named Umayr. Every time the Prophet (pbuh) saw Zayd, he would call him as “Abu Umayr” meaning “Umayr’s father”. One day Zayd’s bird died and Zayd became very sad. Learning of this incident, the Prophet (pbuh) went to Zayd’s house to visit him. Zayd’s sadness influenced the Prophet’s merciful heart a lot. He wanted to cheer him up. He stroked the boy’s hair and kissed his cheek. He then said smiling,

“O Abu Umayr! What happened to Nughayr (i.e. a bird or a nightingale like a sparrow)?”

Relieved by the Prophet’s concern, Zayd laughed at these words. The fact that his pain was shared by the Prophet comforted him.



When our beloved Prophet went to visit Zayd whose bird died, what do you think Zayd thought and felt?

.....

.....

.....

THE CHILDREN OF THE MARTYR

In the battle of Mu'tah, the Prophet's uncle's son Jafar (pbuh) was martyred. However, before the army returned to Medina, the Prophet went to Jafar's house. Asma, Jafar's wife, did all her housework that day, kneaded the bread dough, washed her children's faces and combed their hair. Asma did not know anything yet about the fate of her husband. When the Prophet (pbuh) saw her, he asked,

"O Asma, where are the children?"

When the Prophet saw the children, he kissed them with tears in his eyes, sobbed and embraced them. Asma, who naturally got apprehensive of his sad state, said,

"O Messenger of Allah, why are you crying and treating my children as if they were orphans? Or have you heard any sad news from Jafar and his friends?"

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "Yes. They were martyred today."

Upon this sad news, Asma began to cry. Then the Prophet (pbuh) rose up and went to his daughter Fatima. He directed her to take food to the house of funeral for three days saying,

"Cook for Jafar's family, they're grieving from the pain that happened to them today." Then he came to the sorrowful family and said,

"Do not cry anymore! After today it is on me to take care of my brother's children."

Then he gathered the children around him and said,

"Come on, let us go to our house.", and took them to his home. He called a barber and got the children haircuts. Then he prayed to Allah for goodness in their lives. After a while, their mother Asma came. When she saw her children well-groomed next to the Prophet, she became very content.

The Prophet said to her, "O Asma! Don't worry about the livelihood and care of your children, I am the guardian of them both in this world and in the Hereafter."

Asma's downcast heart filled with joy and found solace in these words. (al-Waqidi, II, 766)

What could Asma have thought when she heard about her husband's death?

.....

.....

How do you think the Prophet's visit to Asma and his children made them feel?

.....

.....

When the Prophet undertook the care of Jafar's orphans, do you think this relived some of the pain of their mother Asma Why?

.....

.....

RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
When a person has a newborn baby	I become very happy	I would go to visit them together with my family and pray to Allah for goodness in his or her life.
When my friend's relative dies	I feel very sad,	I visit him to deliver my condolences and to share his sorrow. I pray to Allah for the forgiveness of the deceased.
When one of my classmates does not come to school one day,	..... ..... .....	I call him after school and visit him at his home to see if he needs anything
When it is a holiday	I become very happy	...............
.....	I want to share the joy of the married couples	I attend their marriage ceremony with a gift.
My friend had a very bad exam and he looks very sad	I feel sorry for him	...............
My friend gets a very high grade in the exam,	..... .....	I congratulate him and wish him to continuous success.
.....

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

GOING BACK TO THE TORTURE

When the polytheists' torture increased in Mecca, the Muslims immigrated to Abyssinia. The king of Abyssinia welcomed the believers. After a while, based on false news that the Meccan polytheists had all converted to Islam, the Muslims in Abyssinia began to return to Mecca.

Uthman bin Maz'un was among those who returned to Mecca. When they approached Mecca, they learned that the news was baseless. They consulted with each other about what to do now. Finally, they decided to enter the city under the protection of one of their relatives.

Some of them found the patronage of a polytheist relative, and those who could not find it secretly entered Mecca. Uthman bin Maz'un was able to enter the city under the protection of his relative Walid b. Mughirah. When the polytheists learned that the emigrants from Mecca to Abyssinia were welcomed there, they got worried that other Muslims might immigrate to Abyssinia and that their numbers might increase there; so the polytheists increased the level of their torture.

Witnessing that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and his companions were subjected to unbelievable persecution and torture, some of them were even branded by fire and some of them beaten with a whip, Uthman bin Maz'un, who lived in safety under the patronage of his relative Walid bin Mughirah, began to consider his situation. He said to himself,

"By Allah, living under the patronage of a pagan and not suffering all kinds of pain and torture for the sake of Allah that my friends and relatives suffer, is not fair. It is more honorable and safer for me to take refuge under the patronage of Allah than to take refuge behind a polytheist." So, he went to Walid, who had protected him this long.

He said, "O my uncle's son! You took me under your patronage! You protected me well and no pagan could do anything to me. But now I want to give up your patronage."

Walid was surprised, "Why?" he asked. "Is not that better for you?"

Uthman replied, "While my Muslim brothers, who have no relative to seek refuge from are suffering, being in such comfort makes me uneasy. It is better to be with my friends both in joy and pain."

Walid said, "Then go and declare this in the Ka'bah."

Together they went to the Ka'bah. Uthman bin Maz'un (r.a.) said,

"O people! I do not like to be under the protection of anyone other than Allah. That is why I am leaving Walid's protection after today."

Thus, even though he suffered from the torments of the idolaters from time to time, he lived with the peace of mind of having shared the same pain that his Muslim brothers were inflicted with in Mecca. (al-Haythami, VI, 34)

Was Uthman bin Maz'un (r.a.) right to be restless while under the patronage of Walid? Why?

If you were Uthman bin Maz'un, what would you have decided? Why?

After Uthman bin Maz'un's decision, how do you think the Muslims who had no protection felt like?

TEST YOURSELF

HOW MUCH ARE YOU WITH YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THEIR HAPPINESS AND SORROW?

1. **Today is your birthday. You sent your friends an invitation. But before they arrive at your home you hear that one of your friends has had a serious accident and is now in the hospital. What would you do?**
 - a) I would visit him the next day.
 - b) I would him after my birthday party is over.
 - c) I would ask my mother. I do whatever she says.
 - d) I would feel sad about the situation and cancel the invitation. I would together with my friends go and visit him.
2. **While your exam went well, your friend's did not and he is crying. What would you do?**
 - a) He should have studied harder. I am proud of myself.
 - b) I would not get too close to him. He might be jealous of me.
 - c) I postpone my joy regarding my success and instead try to comfort him first.
 - d) I say, "Oh, those exams, why do people feel so upset about these exams?"
3. **Your uncle's baby was born; but they live in a house a little away from where you live. Your parents are going to visit them. You have an important test in two days. What would you do?**
 - a) I would go to visit. I will study a little harder on my exam tomorrow night.
 - b) I would send my greetings to my uncle with my parents, then I would visit him when I can.
 - c) I would say to myself, "Let the baby grow up a little, then I will see him anyway."
 - d) I would think to myself, "May everyone raise their baby in goodness and health."
4. **Your dad came home in the evening and he looks pretty sad. In a little while, you can tell from his conversation with your mother that he was fired. You had a very important achievement at school on that day. What would you do??**
 - a) After some time, I would get nearer my father, and then share my joy if it is appropriate.
 - b) I would share my joy directly, maybe he will be happy too.
 - c) I would leave him alone. I would mind my own business.
 - d) I would begin to cry. I think "what will happen to us."
5. **Your brother got a good grade in mathematics today at school. You always dreamed of such success in mathematics. What would you do?**
 - a) I would try to hide my jealousy, but I would tell him that this is not a real success.
 - b) I would ignore and pretend not to see him and his joy.
 - c) I would congratulate him, and be happy for his success.
 - d) I would congratulate him, then I would cry without anyone seeing.
6. **A friend who was not very close to you said they were in financial trouble and asked you for a loan. You got some money saved from your allowances. What would you do?**
 - a) I would say "I am sorry, I cannot."
 - b) I would ask when he can pay it back and the give him a loan.
 - c) I would give it. If he pays, he pays, and if he does not, it is okay.
 - d) I would scold him by saying, "Am I a bank?" otherwise, it becomes a habit with such people.



EMPATHY

A DIFFICULT DAY

One day, at school, the class door was opened. It was the principal. He called a friend's name and asked him to come to his office. He was a very close friend of yours. A little later, the meeting must have ended, and your friend re-entered the class. He was crying, and trembling. He seemed shaken by what had happened. He could not speak. He hurriedly packed his things and quickly left the class as if he needed to escape.

You asked your teacher for permission to leave, and you followed him; but you could not catch up with him. He was already gone. Then you walked into the principal's office. You told him that he was your best friend and that you needed to know you what was the matter with his friend. "His mother..." said the principal, "She passed away. That is why we sent your friend home."

You so wanted it to be a jest. But how could that be a prank? Especially, the principal would never make such jokes. You came to your senses and asked the principal, "Teacher, can I go after him?" "Sure!" said the principal. "Friends become apparent in difficult times," he added.

You went to class to pack your things. When you opened the door, you realized that your friends had started on an exam. Then you remembered that you had an exam on that day. It was a test of a lesson that you had got a very low grade at the previous exams and that you had revised very well for the previous evening. You were hoping to pass this test. Moreover, your parents were very concerned about your success in this exam. But today was a very difficult day for your friend. You put yourself in his place for a moment. It was a pain you did not want to imagine. You could not leave him alone on this day. You wanted to comfort him, hug him, and advise him to be patient. However, you were in a dilemma. What will you do now?



INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES



1. What do you see in the picture?
.....
2. What kind of relationship can there be between the children in the photograph?
.....
3. What could these two friends share in their lives?
.....
4. What are the most important signs of their friendship?
.....
5. What could they be doing together in a day?
.....
6. What do you think should be done for the continuation of friendships? Why?
.....
7. What kind of behaviors harms children's friendships? Why?
.....
8. What are their greatest material and spiritual gains from their friendship? Why?
.....
9. How do you think their friendship will be when they are in their forties? Why?
.....

STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

DESKMATE

Elif and Ayşe were two very close friends sharing the same desk in the 7th grade. They loved each other very much; they studied together, spent time together during the breaks; they even went to each other's house from time to time. But in recent days, there was a serenity in Elif. She was not happy, but she was trying to hide it.

Ayşe told Elif after school, "My mother will not be home tonight. Let us go to your house, we will study, and maybe your mother will make some cookies or something."

Elif said, "All right, but I do not know if she made any cookies." They both smiled and set off for Elif's house together.

On arrival, Elif's mother welcomed them with a smile; but it was not difficult to notice that the smile on her face was forced. They went in, and straight away they began to do their homework in case they launched into a long conversation because tonight they had a lot of homework to do. They were continuously working hard but there was no end to the homework. They were also tired, and some snacks would have been great but there was no tray of cookies. They went into the kitchen, and found and ate some snacks. Then they went back to the room to study for their next day test. It was not a difficult exam, so just a quick glance would be enough to get ready for it. They had just begun to study when the bell rang. Elif did not run to open the door. There was a short silence. Her mother opened the door. It was her father. As he entered, his parents began to argue. They were both blaming and shouting at each other. It was not like a conversation because they were yelling. Elif looked into Ayşe's eyes and started to cry. It felt like that through the sobbing and the silence she was saying, "Do you now understand the reason for my serenity and hopelessness?" Ayşe after having understood also began to cry. She felt like a knife had been struck directly in her heart and she embraced Elif with a big hug. Elif began to cry even more, but

this crying was from the relief of being finally understood and being empathized with. Ayşe could not say anything because she did not know what to say. They both just cried. Finally, Ayşe said, "I should go." She left quietly, and Elif saw her off without a word.

Ayşe did not know what more could happen in one evening. When she came home, she felt a part of her heart remained with Elif. She cried a little longer and prayed for her family for a long time. She did not say anything to anyone.

When they went to school the next day, they did not have their old sense of joy, but they felt closer to each other. Elif felt the relief of being able to share her pain, and Ayşe felt the peace of being able to share in her friend's pain.



CLASS ACTIVITY

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURES OF COUNTRIES

Talk about the differences between societies that share their sadness, joy and have strong social associations and those with weak social associations. Ask your students questions leading them to think about the reasons that lead societies to this structure and the consequences. Then, with the table below, assign each student the task of researching a country's social relations. In the last lesson, evaluate the relationship between the contents of the table below with each other.

Country Name	USA	Iran	UK	Japan	Indonesia	Egypt	Spain
The amount of time that they spend in social relations							
The amount of time they spend at work							
The frequency of the incidence of cardiovascular diseases							
The frequency of the incidence of psychological disorders such as depression							
The rates of suicide							
The number of children who live with single parents due to reasons like divorce							
The rate of happy people							

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW

My behaviors in which I share the pain / joy of my brothers and sisters	The Later State			
	Love and respect between us strengthened. (10 points)	He became happy and smiled at me (15 points)	I have become a good example for everyone (20 points)	He prayed to Allah for my goodness (30 points)
I congratulated my friend who was very successful in the exam.				
I went to see our neighbor's newborn baby.				
I attended the funeral of a Muslim brother whom I did not know very well.				
I attended the wedding feast we were invited to attend.				
I went to visit my aunt in another city who had an accident.				
My uncle passed the university exam, and I congratulated him on the phone.				
I went to kiss my teacher's hand during the holiday.				

CHAPTER 20



KNOWING THE MANNERS OF SPEECH

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY ALLAH

MY LORD SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it)."
(Qaf, 50: 18)

Every word that comes out of my mouth is recorded by angels. I have to watch my speech.

"And be moderate in your pace, and lower your voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass." (Luqman, 31: 19)

I need to gain the habit of speaking in a low voice, not loud.

"Say to My servants that they should (only) say those things that are best..."
(al-Isra, 17: 53)

I should prefer to speak with nice, kind and polite words.

"(the believers are those) Who avoid vain talk" (al-Mu'minun, 23: 3)

I am going to stay away from talking idly, and from words and actions that do not give any benefit.

"And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!"
(al-Furqan, 25: 63)

If someone teases me, I am not going to respond to them with bad words or use foul language.

"O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: And spy not on each other behind their backs..."
(al-Hujurat, 49: 12)

I will be careful not to talk behind anyone's back, to gossip, not to think badly about anyone, and I will not probe into anyone's faults.

THE MUSLIM WHO IS LOVED BY MY PROPHET

MY PROPHET SAID

AND I HAVE UNDERSTOOD

"Do not say anything for which you will have to apologize."
(Ibn Maja, Zuhd, 15)

I must speak with a thoughtful mind, and in the state of anger or joy I must not say a word that I will regret later.

"Whoever can guarantee (the chastity of) what is between his two jaw-bones and what is between his two legs (i.e. his tongue and his private parts), I guarantee Paradise for him." (al-Bukhari, Riqaq, 23)

When I protect my tongue from bad words and my eyes from the prohibited sights. I hope I will gain paradise!

"When three persons are together, then no two of them should hold secret counsel excluding the third person."
(al-Bukhari, Isti'dhan, 47)

I must not make secrets that could break someone else's heart.

"Indeed among the excellence of a person's Islam is that he leaves what does not concern him."
(al-Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 11)

To be a good Muslim, I will not talk about things that do not concern me.

"It is enough as an evil for a person to despise his brother." (Muslim, Birr, 32)

I will not insult my Muslim brother with my words and behavior.

"Whoever shames his brother for a sin, he shall not die until he (himself) commits it." (al-Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 53/2505)

There is no condemnation of anybody's sins. I am not going to hurt anyone with the words that come out of my mouth. This is how I can prove that I love my Prophet.



A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN HUMAN RELATIONS

The most important feature that distinguishes man from other living beings is his intellect; that is the ability to think. And the reflection of thought takes place through words. Our ideas, beliefs, preferences, things we will do, our love, our mercy, our justice, all the values that make us who we are, are always reflected in our words and attitudes. Animals also have some way of understanding; but not through words like those of men. That is why, after the intellect the second most precious feature given to man is the ability to speak; that is, his ability to express what he thinks and feels.

What happens if we play a game of silence for three days, a week, or a month? None of us want to be someone who can think, but cannot speak. Do we use this blessing properly and courteously? How should we talk to others? To what points should we pay attention to when we speak? When we talk to the other person, do we notice the effects of our words on them?

For example, do you not pay attention so as not to speak too loudly or make sure that you are not shouting? People who shout when speaking are considered to be rude people. Moreover, yelling can hurt the feelings of people that we are talking to, whereas, the kind and the gentle person speaks in a normal tone, understandably, with soft and pleasant words.

Furthermore, people who speak pointlessly, and who stretch it out, make their listeners very weary. In addition, such people are insensitive, and do not give an opportunity to other people to speak. Therefore, it is best to express oneself with short and concise sentences.

It is essential in everyday life to be cautious against speaking about somebody behind their back and also not to reveal the confidential conditions and statements of people. For example, is it not important that when a friend makes an error against you, instead of scolding him, to show him his mistake by using soft but definite words? In fact, when you do the opposite and scold him, the situation will only get worse. Additionally, you will hurt his feelings.

Whispering in public is also a very wrong action. For instance, if some people began whispering between themselves in your presence you would probably think that they were talking about you, wouldn't you? That is how everyone feels. The whispering between two individuals while they are with their larger group of friends is hurtful, heartbreaking and a bad habit.

In your conversations you should already be paying utter most attention to not lie, curse, use swear words, and to avoid making dishonest promises. This is because such speech will always make people lose their propriety, dignity and worth.

It is also evident that empty talk that have no benefit in terms of both this world and the Hereafter also diminish the status of the human being. Have you ever been with people that are simply chattering for the sake of it? Their chatter is nothing but a waste of time, isn't it?

It is obvious that when you speak in the presence of your teachers or your parents you do not speak to them as you speak to your friends. Certainly, you speak in their presence when they ask you something or when they give leave for you to say something, and in that case you find yourself speaking decorously without interrupting any the words of your elders.

A person's attention to what he says is truly a reflection of the beauty of his Islam and his beautiful character. Those who speak courteously, politely and on beautiful subjects will gain both in the world and in the Hereafter. If you pay attention to people then you will find out that those who speak with polite words and act courteously are the ones who know the manners of speech. Those who do not hurt the feelings of others through their words, and protect their own hearts and souls from bad words are people who are admired by everyone and with whom everyone wants to be friends. While such people themselves are peaceful and composed and share out their peace and joy to those around them.



THE BEST EXAMPLE FROM "THE BEST ONE"

MY BEST EXEMPLAR, MY BELOVED PROPHET

WHEN AISHA (R. ANHA) MADE A MISTAKE

Our Prophet's (pbuh) wife, the symbol of decency and modesty Aisha (r. anha) once got jealous of the Prophet's conversation with his another gentle and thoughtful wife Safiyya (r. anha). With the passion of jealousy, Aisha (r. anha) said an unpleasant things about our mother Safiyya. She wanted to belittle Safiyya so she said,

"O Messenger of Allah! Safiyya is short."



The Prophet felt very sad hearing these words and warned Aisha by saying,

"O Aisha! You have said such a thing that it could change the water of the sea if it were mixed in it."

One day Aisha (r.a.) described a person whom she did not like by mimicking him. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did not like this situation also and said to her:

"Even if I were given the most precious things in the world, I would certainly not want to be described through mimicking as it is such a conduct that I dislike." (Abu Dawud, Adab, 35/4875)

What kind of style of speech did the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) use to warn his wife?

What might have happened if our Prophet (pbuh) had warned his wife harshly against this type of mistake?

Why did the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) show such sensitivity against the mistakes made in the form of gossip and mimicry?

THE PROPHET WHO KEPT HIS SILENCE

The Tabuk expedition, which has a great importance in the history of Islam, was an expedition carried out at a place about one thousand km away from Medina in the hot summer days. It was the time of the date harvest. In Tabuk, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was with his Companions when he remembered Ka'b b. Malik who had not participated in the campaign. When he could not see him around, he asked,

"What did Ka'b bin Malik do? Why is he not among us?"

A man from the sons of Salima said, "O Messenger of Allah! His incessant interest in his clothes and pride kept him in Medina.

Upon this response, which was a very negative reflection on Ka'b, Mu'adh b. Jabal intervened and said to the man, "What an appalling thing you have said."

Then Mu'adh b. Jabal, turned to our Prophet (pbuh) and said,

"O Messenger of Allah! We only know good things about him."

The Messenger of Allah said nothing, kept his silence and in this way expressed his pleasure with Mu'adh's response. (al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 79)



What kind of atmosphere did Mu'adh's good words and his goodwill about his Muslim brother create in that gathering?

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If Ka'b were there, what words would he have wanted to hear?

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If you make a mistake or commit a sin, what kind of talk amongst your friends would please you?

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BRIEF AND TO THE POINT

One day the Messenger of Allah was talking with his companions. He was a teacher who knew the best way to teach beneficial knowledge. He asked his companions,

“Do you know what backbiting is?”

They (the Companions) said: “Allah and His Messenger know best.”

Thereupon he (the Holy Prophet) said: “Backbiting means you are talking about your brother in a manner that he does not like.”

It was said to him: “What is your opinion about this issue if I actually found (that failing) in my brother that I made a mention of?”

He said: “If (that failing) that you assert is actually found (in him), you are in fact backbiting him, and if that failing is not true for him, then it is slander.” (Muslim, Birr, 70)

Why did the Companions not answer when the Prophet (pbuh) asked a question?

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What subtleties did the Companions pay attention to when talking to the Prophet (pbuh)?

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What do you think is the reason that nobody felt hurt when the Prophet (pbuh) spoke?

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RECOGNIZE ⇨ FEEL ⇨ DO

How would a true believer act in the following situations?



SITUATION	FEELING	BEHAVIOR
When someone enrages me by saying that I did something which I had not done,	I get angry, and I think I have been slandered	But I defend myself without shouting.
If a friend of mine starts to backbite another friend in my presence,	What would I feel if similar things were said about me?	I tell my friend I do not like it, and if he continues, I will leave.
Sometimes my teachers or parents annoy me as well,	..... ..... .....	But I never raise my voice against them.
.....	I get somewhat excited about telling them the idea; but	I make sure to explain my idea in short and concise sentences.
If I meet someone who insults me / curses me,	..... ..... .....	But I would never swear back at him. I try to leave quietly as soon as possible.
If a friend of mine starts to use mock names for another person,	I feel very uncomfortable as if it was done to me.	..... ..... .....
.....	I think it is a waste of time and I trivialize it both for me and for them.	..... ..... .....
If my friend looks sad and frenzied and does not say anything when I ask him,	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....
.....

FROM THE LIVES OF GREAT MUSLIMS

KEEPING A SECRET

When Anas (r.a.) was a nine or ten-year-old boy, his mother gave him to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to help with his work. This fortunate boy spent the best years of his life with the Prophet. He learned being both a good human being and a good Muslim by living with the Prophet (pbuh).

One day, little Anas was playing with his friends in the street when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came to them.

He smilingly said, "As-salam alaykum, boys," and called Anas to himself.

He whispered something in his ear and Anas left running. Young Anas gladly went to do the task given to him by the Messenger of Allah. But when the task took a long time, his return home was delayed.

When he got home, his mother asked, "Why are you late?"

Anas replied, "The Messenger of Allah sent me to take care of a task. That is why I am late."

"What was the task?" his mother asked.

"This is a secret between me and the Prophet," said Anas.

Upon this his mother said, "Son, keep the secret of the Messenger of Allah well and do not tell anyone!" and appreciated his son's attention to keep a secret. (Muslim, Fadail al-Sahaba, 145, 146)



What would be the result if Anas had answered his mother's question?

Why was the Messenger of Allah able to ask a young child to keep a secret?

Can the secret of a person be shared with another? Can there be any exceptions?

NOT TO GET THE TONGUE ACCUSTOMED

One day, when the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) was with his disciples, they encountered a pig on the road. He said to the animal,

"Go in peace."

Those who were with him asked, "Do you say this to a pig?"

The Prophet Jesus (pbuh) said, "I fear lest I accustom my tongue to evil speech." (Malik, Muwatta, Kalam, 4)

Why did the Prophet Jesus fear accustoming his tongue to evil speech?

Are there any bad, evil, slang words that you are afraid to use in your daily conversations? What are these?

How would you feel if you use them?

What are the more innocent words that you might prefer instead of saying those words?

THIS IS THE BEST WAY THAT IT CAN BE EXPRESSED

One day the Companion Qubath b. Ushaym and Uthman b. Affan (r. anhum) were talking about the old days.

Qubath b. Ushaym said, "I and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) were born in the Year of the Elephant"

Uthman bin Affan asked, "What a coincidence? Which one of you is greater, you or the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)?"

Qubath (r.a.) replied in a very polite way, "The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is much greater than me, but I have an earlier birthday."

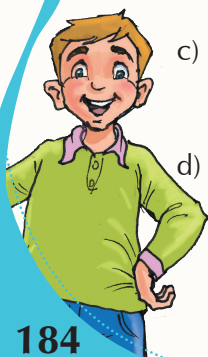
What was the statement that Qubath (r.a.) was afraid to use in order to avoid showing disrespect to the Prophet (pbuh)? Why did he not use it?

What does the courtesy and gentleness in speech bring to the person?

TEST YOURSELF

HOW MUCH ATTENTION DO YOU PAY TO THE MANNERS OF SPEECH?

1. **When a friend talked about another friend, he called him a liar. What would you do?**
 - a) I would not do anything. I do not care what he says.
 - b) I would smack him in the middle of his mouth.
 - c) I would warn him by asking, "Do you want that somebody to say something like that about you?"
 - d) I would tell that friend about what he said.
2. **Your classmate started insulting you in order for you to help him cheat. What would you do?**
 - a) I would respond by insulting him.
 - b) I would complain to the teacher.
 - c) No matter how angry I am, I would not respond, and not use bad words. I would just leave.
 - d) I would begin to cry.
3. **When the teacher is delivering a lecture in the classroom, you always feel like interrupting and saying something. What would you do?**
 - a) Of course I would say what I know. Besides, my teacher sees how much I know.
 - b) I would raise my hand over and over again, and finally my teacher will have to point towards me and ask me to "Say it!"
 - c) I will speak when the teacher finishes his / her speech and gives me permission.
 - d) I would keep my silence. I would keep it to myself.
4. **You visited a neighbor. The elders are talking enthusiastically about an interesting subject. You want to talk. But you do not know much about the subject. What would you do?**
 - a) When I get the opportunity, I would interject and say a couple of words.
 - b) I would listen to them thoroughly, never speaking.
 - c) If I cannot speak, I would leave the room.
 - d) I will answer if asked, otherwise I will keep silent.
5. **Guests came to your house. When your parents were talking, they started backbiting. What would you do?**
 - a) If I have hopes that they would listen to me, I will warn them nicely.
 - b) I would reproach them by saying, "Do you realize what you are doing?"
 - c) I would leave the room and never come back.
 - d) I cannot do anything. I would go to another room and feel sorry for myself.
6. **Your brother made a wrong against you and you yelled at him so much that he started to cry. What would you do?**
 - a) Good, this would make him understand his mistake. Probably he will not do it again.
 - b) I would go over to him, scare him even more so he does not do it again.
 - c) I would do nothing, my mother comforted him anyway.
 - d) I would regret what I did. I would try to win his heart back. When he calms down, I would advise him not to make the same mistake again.



EMPATHY

YOUR PARENTS HAD SUCH A BIG FIGHT

You have witnessed your parents argue from time to time. However, this time they had such a big fight that you were worried that they might get separated.

You heard your father and your grandmother talking about it on the evening of this fight. You were not listening through a door. They were just talking so fervently that they did not realize you were there.

Your father was very angry. Your grandmother was trying to understand his anger. But the subject had come to such a point that your father began to insult the mother, while your grandmother was saying, "She already did similar things in the past" and increasing your father's anger without noticing it.

You were very upset and animated at the same time. Your mother could be wrong, or maybe your father was wrong. You did not know. But you were disappointed due to the insults about a person under whose feet paradise was laid.

On the other hand, you could not stand your father getting so angry. What was it that made this man so angry?

Your grandmother was a good woman. You witnessed that she always desired for your well-being. And she loved her grandchildren. But why was she talking about your mother back and forth like she was collaborating with your father?

You could not make sense of what was happening or what was being said. You were wondering if you may be able to keep your mouth closed and listen till the end of their talk. But then you would witness more of their anger and those bad words coming out of their mouths. You thought the earlier this conversation was over, the better.

What if you ran away from them and told your mother what had happened? You said to yourself that your mother had a right to know what had been said about her. No, you thought then your mom would probably be angry at them.

If you intervened and asked them, "Why do you talk like that?" Would that help? "You are all dear to me, can't you solve this problem without getting angry?" How would they respond? Would your father do you any harm in his anger? Could he hurt your feelings and break your heart? But you could not stand to hear them speak about your mother like that. Is there any way for you to end this thing nicely without informing your mother about what had happened, without allowing your father and grandmother to speak badly behind your mother's back, and without making your father any angrier?

How do you feel in this situation, what do you expect your neighbors to do for you?

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INSIDE LIFE

INTERPRETING PICTURES

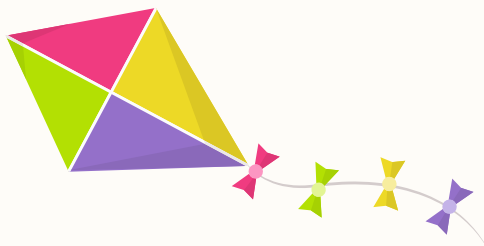


Picture 1



Picture 2

- What do you see in the pictures?
.....
.....
- What are the right and wrong behaviors between the children in both pictures?
.....
.....
- What could the child in the first picture be saying to her sister? Why?
.....
.....
- What could the child in the second picture be saying to his brother? Why?
.....
.....
- How does the child in her sister's lap in the first photo feel?
.....
.....
- How does the boy pulled by his brother in the second photo feel?
.....
.....
- Is the possibility that the sister and the brother in both photos may convince their siblings in the same way? Why?
.....
.....
- Do you think that people who do not understand each other can agree by saying dreadful and bad words to each other? Why?
.....
.....
- Would the result change if the older brother in the second photograph spoke nicely and friendly to his sibling? Why?
.....
.....
- Do you think people can solve their problems by getting angry and insulting each other? Why?
.....
.....



STORIES FROM REAL LIFE

CITY BUS

Leyla, a new university student, was trying to adjust herself to life in Istanbul, which is a city both charming, wonderful and unique, but at the same time a crowded and stressed city. She got admission to the psychology department that she always wanted. She had successfully completed the first year and had set out to go to her hometown for vacation. She was very happy; because she was able to get a cheap flight ticket due to her early made travel arrangements ahead of time. She was going to be at her hometown by plane in one and a half hour, which normally took 18 hours by coach.

Hours before the departure time, she left for the airport because she did not want to have any setbacks that would prevent her catching the plane. She took the city bus to the airport. She found a seat and sat down. In the next few minutes, passengers with large suitcases filled the bus.

5-6 minutes after the bus departed, a woman sitting in front turned towards the crowd and said, "Is the owner of the blue suitcase here? Someone just left it and got off the bus."

The old woman got worried when there was no answer from the crowd.

She called again: "Isn't the owner of the blue suitcase here?"

When no one said anything, the woman panicked. She started to shout saying,



"There might be a bomb in it. We hear it on the news, there might be bombs in abandoned suitcases." People started to talk to each other on the bus.

The woman told the driver, "Driver, call the police immediately." The driver did not give her any attention and continued to drive. Seeing that the driver did not care, this time the woman began to shout as loud as she could:

"What kind of man are you? How can you ignore the lives of all these people? I want to go to my house tonight, don't you? Don't you have children?"

Within her panic, the woman was not aware that she was insulting the driver. The driver got very angry, pulled the bus aside and in anger opened the suitcase.

"Here you go! There is nothing inside, just clothes." This time the woman became even angrier.

"How can you open that suitcase by yourself, disregarding the lives of the people here? Only the police bomb experts should have touched it."

This time the driver got even angrier.

"I am not driving the bus, do whatever you want to!" He got off the bus.

This time, the passengers began to get angry, because they were all airport passengers, and nobody wanted to miss their flight. One of the passengers shouted at the woman,

"We are not afraid, you and others are afraid, so get off, get on another bus, you have no right to annoy the driver, and how is he going to drive the bus with this kind of morale?"

She fell silent and calmed down. One of the passengers calmed everybody by informing them that he had seen the man who brought the suitcase. That passenger had gone to fill his card at the toll booths because he had not had enough balance on the card. Meanwhile the bus moved on and the man missed the bus.

These words comforted everyone. The driver sat back in his seat, and the passengers calmed down. Thank goodness, the passengers reached the airport unharmed..



CLASS ACTIVITY

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

Could you fill out the table given below as a person who has learnt the manners of speech?

An example of an offensive / bad sentence used by an administrator against his employees:	To whom, and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you express your feelings?
"Will you never understand what you are told correctly?"	Employees and their families also felt humiliated, thinking how hard it was to work with them, and wanted to quit as soon as possible.	"I think I misunderstood. You can ask me again and I will listen more carefully. We're a good team. We've done very well before. "
An example of an offensive / bad sentence used by a politician against the public:	To whom, and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you express your feelings?
An example of an offensive / bad sentence used by a teacher against his student:	To whom, and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you express your feelings?
An example of an offensive / bad sentence used by a parent against their child	To whom, and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you express your feelings?

Could you fill out the table given below as a person who has learnt the manners of speech?

An example of a good sentence used by a friend:	To whom, and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you tell it in a better way?
An example of a good sentence used by a grandfather to his grandson:	To whom and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you tell it in a better way?
An example of a good sentence used by a sister/ brother to her/his younger brother	To whom, and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you tell it in a better way?
An example of a good sentence used by child to his/ her mother:	To whom, and what did this sentence make you feel or think?	If it were you, how would you tell it in a better way?

YOU CAN BE THE BEST

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TABLE GIVEN BELOW

My sample behaviors reflecting my manners of speech	The Satisfaction Level of My Parents			
	My parents or teachers became very happy. (10 points)	I became happy, and my heart was relieved. (15 points)	I felt that I have become a good example for everyone (20 points)	We started getting along better with my brother and friends. (30 points)
I did not interrupt my teachers in class.				
When they started backbiting and gossiping in my presence, I immediately warned them and silenced them.				
I did not say insulting and unpleasant words, I did not swear pointlessly.				
I spoke with short and concise sentences.				
I stopped speaking loudly and yelling.				
When I was asked a question, I shared my knowledge without being haughty.				
I did not interject into the talk of my elders in a gathering.				
I talked among my friends about things that I hoped would be good.				

NOTES